

Promoting Education Sustainable Development Through English Writing Skills Performance Improvement – Case Study on Students’ Perception in Undergraduate Writing Course

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ABSTRACT

Academic writing is introduced to higher education students since the first year at BINUS University. A course named English for Academic Writing focuses on the development and improvement of academic writing skills in the English language of students in Global Class. The respondents are the students of Computer Science and Information System. Data was collected through an online survey filled by the students, and interview with the lecturer. The collected data will be analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. This paper discusses the perception of students on the improvement of academic writing skills applied in writing an abstract, introduction, literature review, methodology, and references. The students mentioned skills such as citing, paraphrasing, referencing, quoting, problem/topic statement writing, finding/result writing were hard to be learned. The students practiced those skills manually and using the feature in Microsoft Words. The result will provide data and information about the improvement made, so the teaching-learning activities applied could become suggestions or feedbacks for the respective class and parallel classes. Therefore, this paper supports the building of students’ capacity in English academic writing skills for sustainable development in education.

Keywords: Academic writing, English language, Writing skills

1. INTRODUCTION

The students of higher education are required to provide academic writing to graduate from the university. Iftanti [1]. wrote that writing is important as it is applied to some daily activities. Global Class in Bina Nusantara University is a type of class that all courses delivered in English so that the academic writing or the thesis will be written in English as well. There is an English course named English for Academic Writing that focused on learning and development of academic writing skills for undergraduate students. The course outputs are the academic papers written by the students. The students learned about writing the sections in academic writing: abstract, introduction, literature review, methodology, findings & discussions, and references. In writing those sections, the students learned to apply APA styles and demonstrated citing, quoting, referencing, paraphrasing and plagiarism. The students were divided into some groups. Each group had a mini project that they had to write

an academic paper based on the research they conducted. During the process of writing, the students could come to discuss any difficulties with the lecturer. The students are encouraged to benefit all the resources available to support the research and the writing.

This paper focused on the perception of the students of Global Class Bina Nusantara University for the improvement of academic writing skills in supporting the sustainable development for quality education. This paper will discuss: 1) The academic writing skills they have learned, 2) The challenges in accomplishing the writing, 3) The other skills learned, 4) The improvement made, and 5) Learned skills for sustainable development. The findings of the paper will be the suggestion and feedback to the respective class and other parallel classes. Knowing and understanding the way of thinking and how the students perceived the improvement made, will be feedback to develop teaching-learning strategies that support quality education for sustainable development.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This paper discussed the perception of the respondents, academic writing skills, the improvement made and the skills supported the sustainable development for quality education.

2.1 Perception

There were many variables that influenced the perceptions explained by Tagoe [2]. The perception was a result of process subjectively. It depended on the value of the person, the experiences and knowledge, Masek [3] wrote in the paper.

2.2 Academic Writing Skills

Pawliczek [4] wrote that creative writing could improve the ways of thinking. While the skills of advanced writing in the higher education were the important elements of academic performance, Kellogg [5] explained.

2.3 Skills for Sustainable Development in Education

Laurie, [6] wrote on the research that education for sustainable development pedagogies was often issue-based. It stimulated the critical thinking through discussions. Leicht [7]. mentioned the competencies that support the sustainable development for quality education. The competencies were systems thinking competency, anticipatory competency, critical thinking competency, collaboration competency, and some other competencies. These competencies could be developed while learning academic writing.

3. METHODOLOGY

This paper applied the mix method, the quantitative and qualitative methods. A quantitative method was used to describe the number of respondents while the qualitative described the improvement made based on the perception of the students.

3.1 Respondent

This paper is to describe the improvement of academic writing skills based on the perception of the students. So there were two types of respondents. The first respondents were the students and the second was the lecturer of the respective classes.

3.1.1 The Students

There were 50 students of the two classes of English for Academic Writing course in the university as the first respondent.

3.1.2 The Lecturer

The second respondent was the respective lecturer of the classes. The lecturer gave the information and data to clarify and validate the data gathered from the students.

3.2 Instrument

The data was collected through an online questionnaire and interview. Google Form was used to collect the data from the students. The link of Google Form was sent to the students. The emails were sent to the lecturer and an interview was conducted to gather data and information from the lecturer.

3.3 Data Analysis

Analysis of data was displayed in numbers. The number was then described qualitatively to answer the research questions.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There are four research questions discussed in this paper: 1) The academic writing skills they have learned, 2) The challenges in accomplishing the writing, 3) The other skills learned and developed, 4) The improvement made, and 5) Improved skills for sustainable development.

4.1 The academic writing skills they have learned

The respondents mentioned some academic writing skills. So, there was more than one skill learned for each respondent. Out of 50 respondents, Table 1 showed that 20 respondents learned Referencing/APA Styles, 24 respondents learned about citation, 4 respondents learned about quotation, 10 respondents learned about paraphrase, 7 respondents learned about plagiarism, and 28 respondents learned about writing. Each respondent may write more than 1 skill.

Table 1. Academic Writing Skills Learned by Students.

Skills	Number of Respondents
Referencing/APA Styles	20
Citation	24
Quotation	4
Paraphrase	10
Plagiarism	7
Writing	28

4.2 The Challenges in Accomplishing the Writing

Challenges faced by students in writing were as follows, 32 respondents answered that the challenges were to write citation, paraphrasing, referencing and quoting, 8 respondents answered that writing the problem or topic statement was the challenge, 10 students answered that writing the result was the difficult part.

Table 2. Challenges in accomplishing the writing.

Challenges	Number of Respondents
Writing citation, paraphrasing, referencing, quoting	32
Writing the problem/topic statement	8
Writing the result/findings	10

4.3 The Other Skills Learned and Developed

In the process of conducting research and writing the academic paper, the students learned other skills. Table 3 showed that 21 respondents learned about critical thinking, 22 respondents learned about collaboration, 19 respondents learned about communication, and 5 respondents learned English.

Table 3. Other skills learned by the students.

Other Skills	Number of Respondents
Critical Thinking	21
Collaboration	22
Communication	19
English	5

4.4 The Improvement Result

Table 4 showed that according to 44 respondents, the academic writing skills have been improved. The other 6 respondents mentioned that the skills have been good and very good or stay fair.

Table 4. Improvement Result.

Respondent	Skills improved	Respondent	Skills improved	Respondent	Skills improved
1	No	18	No	36	Yes
2	Yes	19	Yes	37	No
3	Yes	20	Yes	38	Yes
4	Yes	21	Yes	39	Yes
5	Yes	22	Yes	40	No
6	Yes	23	Yes	41	Yes

7	Yes	24	Yes	42	Yes
8	Yes	25	Yes	43	Yes
9	Yes	26	No	44	Yes
10	Yes	27	Yes	45	Yes
11	Yes	28	No	46	Yes
12	Yes	29	Yes	47	Yes
13	Yes	30	Yes	48	Yes
14	Yes	31	Yes	49	Yes
15	Yes	32	Yes	50	Yes
16	Yes	33	Yes		
17	No	34	Yes		

4.5 Learned Skills for Sustainable Development

Table 5 showed that according to the respondents, critical thinking and collaboration skills learned in the process of learning English for academic writing. These skills support the sustainable development.

Table 5. Learned Skills for sustainable development.

Skills	Number of Respondents
Critical Thinking	21
Collaboration	22

5. CONCLUSION

The improvement of the academic writing skills showed above based on the perception of the respondents. The lecturer mentioned that most students got at least score 80 for the course. This showed that the improvement had been made. There were academic writing skills learned related to referencing/APA Styles, citation, quotation, paraphrase, plagiarism. There were challenges: writing references, quotation, paraphrase, citation; writing problem or topic statement; writing result or findings, faced in the process. There were also other skills learned such as critical thinking, collaboration, and communication, beside English skills itself.

The lecturer applied collaborative learning where the students had to conduct research and write the paper in a group. The online quizzes and consultation session had been given during the process. The skills for sustainable development such as critical thinking and collaboration also learned during the process of the learning.

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