



Writing Methods to Create Effective Sentences for Informatics Students of University of AMIKOM Purwokerto

Zulia Karini

Universitas AMIKOM Purwokerto, Purwokerto, Indonesia

zulia@amikompurwokerto.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Writing Methods;
Essay;
Effective Sentence

Dealing with academic activities, students at universities must have skill in writing. However, many students, when going to quote from English reference sources, just copy without paraphrasing first which will result in a high level of plagiarism. Interviews and questionnaires conducted with several students of University of Amikom Purwokerto, class 2018 Informatics study program showed the difficulties they experienced when they wanted to make English sentences. This study aims to describe the difficulty of writing English sentences for students of the Informatics study program, to find out the causes of these errors, and to try to provide alternative solutions to overcome the difficulties faced by students in making English sentences by designing a writing learning method for an effective sentence. This research is a descriptive study, which describes in fact the difficulties experienced by students in understanding English texts. The instrument used in data collection was the English text questions. In this study, the data analysis used consisted of three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. The results showed that some problems faced by Amikom students in writing English sentences were repeating the words, repeating the phrases, repeating the clauses, and using verbose/wordy sentences. Thus, the writing learning methods were designed, namely: sentence combining, learning techniques to combine sentences, they are compounding, compounding sentence elements, subordinating one clause to another, using appositives to connect ideas, using participial phrases to connect ideas, using absolute phrases to connect ideas.



Article History:

Received: 21-09-2020
Revised : 25-10-2020
Accepted: 19-11-2020
Online : 01-12-2020



This is an open access article under the **CC-BY-SA** license



<https://doi.org/10.31764/ijeca.v3i3.2976>

A. INTRODUCTION

English is one of the subjects taught from elementary school to college. This is because English is a foreign language that must be learned. In practice both teachers and students still face many problems during the learning process (Karini, 2019). Problems in learning English are not only found at the level of primary, secondary and upper education, but will continue to the tertiary level (Mubarak et al., 2013). Several studies have proven this with each English language skill. Some results of the analysis show that students' difficulties based on the skills taught are

evenly distributed in each school (Widiyanto, 2017). As the research conducted by Hermayawati (Hermayawati, 2010), it was stated that preliminary observation results indicates that the initial capital (intakes) their English is very low. Though, the quality of the input certainly will affect both the process as well learning outcomes. Quality intakes of the College is the output of the education in secondary schools. Widyawati (Suardani, 2019) in her research explained that the lack of ability to master the material is a factor that causes students to experience learning difficulties. Her statement was supported by Hasibuan (Dewi, 2016) that students' self-confidence categorized as poor to average because students were afraid of making mistake related error, never consult English problem to the teacher, and no open discussion to parents. On the other hand, teaching aids was considered as major because there is no sufficient textbook, and limited media of language teaching and learning.

The ability to write, in this case is the ability to write English essays (writing skills), is one of the skills that students at a university must have (Rahmawati & Thalia, 2012). This is because their academic activities require them to write both in lectures, final assignments, and writing scientific papers such as journals. Many reference sources are now available in the form of articles, books, journals and proceedings which are often written in English (Kirom, 2019). Often students, when going to quote from these reference sources, just copy without paraphrasing first which will result in a high level of plagiarism. Practise of writing needs to be done as it is proved by Sormin that college students have little opportunity to practice (Puspitaloka & Wahyuna, 2018).

Interviews and questionnaires conducted with several students of the University of Amikom Purwokerto, class 2018 Informatics study program showed the difficulties they experienced when they wanted to make English sentences. Some students when asked to compose one sentence in English they understand all of their vocabulary, but do not understand the correct English sentence patterns and the use of several other grammatical aspects such as tenses, articles, and conjunctions in the sentences they compose. In writing English sentences, it turns out that not only knowledge of vocabulary is needed, but there are several other aspects that determine the success of composing English sentences (Munirah, 2015). Therefore, students of the Informatics study program, University of Amikom Purwokerto, who are not students majoring in English, are deemed necessary to learn to write effective sentences in English (writing for an effective sentence).

There are several studies on the analysis of student difficulties in writing English sentences including: 1) Research conducted by Rizkiarini and Muhajir (Sulaiman & Muhajir, 2019) with the title "The Difficulties of Writing Scientific Work at The English Education Students". This study aims to determine the students' difficulties in writing scientific papers at the English Language Education, Universitas Muslim Indonesia and to find out the needs and learning objectives of the students. The sample was consisted of 44 English Education students registered at the UMI Faculty of Literature. 2) Alfaki (Alfaki, 2015) raised the research with the title: "University Students 'English Writing Problems: Diagnosis And Remedy". The purpose of this study was to identify student writing problems in English and to suggest ways of solving these problems. The findings revealed that the students had a variety of writing problems: language problems at the morphological and syntactic levels; usage errors, and mechanical errors, namely, spelling, punctuation and capital letters, a lack of some writing development skills, cognitive problems and graphomotor problems. Both studies analyzed the difficulties of students majoring in English in understanding English texts using descriptive qualitative research methods.

Similar to the previous research, the writer intends to do a similar research, but with the object of research, they are students of non-English majors, namely Informatics Engineering students, AMIKOM UNIVERSITY, Purwokerto. The aim of the research was to find out the obstacles faced by Informatics Engineering students in understanding English text and find solutions by designing methods.

B. METHODS

This research is a descriptive study (Suryana, 2012), which describes factually the difficulty of making English sentences for 100 students of the Informatics study program, University of Amikom Purwokerto based on existing facts. The instruments used in data collection were questionnaires from 100 students of the Informatics study program, University of Amikom Purwokerto, batch 2018 and essays written by students of the Informatics study program. Triangulation technique is used to check the validity of research data. As stated by Sugiyono (Sugiyono, 2012) that when a researcher uses triangulation, the researcher collects data as well as checks whether the data obtained is credible or not with various data collection techniques and reference sources. Fika (Megawati, 2016) in her research also used this method in finding students' difficulties in achieving effective learning English.

In this study, the data analysis used consisted of three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification.

1. Data Reduction. The researcher summarizes the data collection process during the learning activity by looking for important points that are the focus of the research data. In this case, it is to classify the answers related to the difficulties faced during learning according to the level of student activity.
2. Presentation of Data. The researcher presents the results of research data that have been summarized by describing in detail and clearly the matters related to student barriers in the learning process of English.
3. Withdrawal of conclusions. The conclusions presented for the first time are provisional. This can change when there is a lack of supporting references to strengthen the results of data collection. When there are valid and consistent supporting references, this researcher can draw credible conclusions.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Problems in Writing English Sentences

a. Repeating the Words

Data 3

Global warming is very dangerous for life people in the world. Global warming include by pollution in the air that up to atmosfer. Indonesia is some one country that include the global warming because in Indonesia many event pollution the air that include by motorcycle or the car. Beside it in Indonesia after event the fire that can make the pollution in air.

The words "Indonesia", "include", and "pollution" in the data above are written three times. The idea of the above sentences is actually about air pollution which can cause global warming happens in some countries, including Indonesia.

b. Repeating the Phrases

Data 1

Nowdays, in the world have happened Global warming, spesialy Indonesia country. Indonesia country is more Global warming country. Almost all of area of Indonesia country have gotten effect of global warming.

The sentences above contain some repetition phrases, like "Indonesia country" and "global warming" are mentioned three times. The main idea of the above sentences

is basically about global warming in the world, and Indonesia is one of the countries which are affected by it.

c. Repeating the Clauses

Data 2

If the intensity of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) in atmosphere was overload, it can make ozone layer broken. It also can make pollution in our environment. And if carbon dioxide in atmosphere was overload, it will make ultra violet rays from sun that entered our atmosphere cannot come back to space again. So, it will make the temperature in our earth increase every year.

The student intends to talk about the effects of Carbon Dioxide for the atmosphere when it is used overload, but unfortunately he repeats the ideas. The sentences above contain some repetition information: clause “Carbon Dioxide in atmosphere was overload” is mentioned in sentence “*If the intensity of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) in atmosphere was overload, it can make ozone layer broken*” and in sentence 3 “*And if carbon dioxide in atmosphere was overload, it will make ultra violet rays from sun that entered our atmosphere cannot come back to space again*”.

d. Using Verbose/Wordy Sentences

Data 3

Now, we always feel hot if noon. In night we always feel very cool. In the noon temperature is very hot. In great city in noon and night feel hot.

Sentence 3 “*In the noon temperature is very hot*” is basically similar with sentence 1 “*Now, we always feel hot if noon*”. These sentences are too wordy.

2. The Design of Writing Learning Method

a. Sentence Combining

Rather than present our ideas in a series of choppy, ineffective sentences, we can relate our ideas precisely by combining the sentences. An alternative to traditional forms of grammar instruction, sentence combining gives students practice in manipulating a variety of basic sentence structures. Sentence combining is, organizing sets of short, choppy sentences into longer, more effective ones. The goal of sentence combining is not to produce longer sentences but rather to develop more effective sentences. Below is an example of ineffective sentences. Start by looking at this list of eight short (and repetitive) sentences:

She was our Latin teacher. We were in high school. She was tiny. She was a birdlike woman. She was swarthy. She had dark eyes. Her eyes were sparkling. Her hair was graying.

b. Techniques to Combine Sentences

In normal speech, we can fit many ideas into one efficient sentence. This section will explore some of the techniques we ordinary writers use to combine sentences so that they connect smoothly and avoid unnecessary words. Because, as stated by Widyamartaya (1989) that a sentence must not contain unnecessary words; the sentence must be concise.

1) Compounding

A compound sentence consists of two or more independent clauses. That means that there are at least two units of thought within the sentence, either one of which can stand by itself as its own sentence. The clauses of a compound sentence are either separated by a semicolon (relatively rare) or connected by a coordinating conjunction (which is, more often than not, preceded by a comma). And the two most common coordinating conjunctions are *and* and *but*. (The others are *or*, *for*, *yet*, and *so*.) This is the simplest technique we have for combining ideas. In the example below, the ideas in ten sentences can fit concisely into two sentences, for a total of fewer than 45 words.

Before combination:

A constellation is a group of stars.

They are easily recognized.

They appear to be close together in the sky.

They appear to form a picture.

To see the picture, lines must be imagined between each star.

The lines are connecting them.

(Combine into a sentence of under 30 words)

Constellations are usually named.

The names are the names of animals.

If not, they're names of common objects.

If not, they're names of characters from mythology.

(Combine into a sentence of under 15 words)

After combination:

A constellation is a group of easily recognized stars that appear to be close together in the sky and to form a picture if lines are imagined connecting them. Constellations are usually named for animals, common objects, or characters from mythology. (29 + 12 words)

2) Compounding Sentence Elements

Within a sentence, ideas can be connected by compounding various sentence elements: subjects, verbs, objects or whole predicates, modifiers, etc. Notice that when two such elements of a sentence are compounded with a coordinating conjunction (as opposed to the two independent clauses of a compound sentence), the conjunction is usually adequate and no comma is required.

Before combination:

President Jefferson believed that the headwaters of the Missouri reached all the way to the Canadian border.

He also believed that meant he could claim all that land for the United States.

After combination:

President Jefferson believed that the headwaters of the Missouri might reach all the way to the Canadian border and that he could claim all that land for the United States.

Notice that the objects must be parallel in construction: Jefferson believed that this was true and that was true. If the objects are not parallel (Jefferson was convinced of two things: that the Missouri reached all the way to the Canadian border and wanted to begin the expedition during his term in office.) the sentence can go awry.

3) Subordinating One Clause to Another

The act of coordinating clauses simply links ideas; subordinating one clause to another establishes a more complex relationship between ideas, showing that one idea depends on another in some way: a chronological development, a cause-and-effect relationship, a conditional relationship, etc. Examples:

William Clark was not officially granted the rank of captain prior to the expedition's departure. Captain Lewis more or less ignored this technicality and treated Clark as his equal in authority and rank.

Combined: *Although William Clark was not officially granted the rank of captain prior to the expedition's departure, Captain Lewis more or less ignored this technicality and treated Clark as his equal in authority and rank.*

4) Using Appositives to Connect Ideas

The appositive is probably the most efficient technique we have for combining ideas. An appositive or appositive phrase is a renaming, a re-identification, of something earlier in the text. You can think of an appositive as a modifying clause from which the clausal machinery (usually a relative pronoun and a linking verb) has

been removed. An appositive is often, but not always, a parenthetical element which requires a pair of commas to set it off from the rest of the sentence.

Example: *Sacagawea, who was one of the Indian wives of Charbonneau, who was a French fur-trader, accompanied the expedition as a translator.* Combined: *A pregnant, fifteen-year-old Indian woman, Sacagawea, one of the wives of the French fur-trader Charbonneau, accompanied the expedition as a translator.*

5) Using Participial Phrases to Connect Ideas

A writer can integrate the idea of one sentence into a larger structure by turning that idea into a modifying phrase. Examples:

Captain Lewis allowed his men to make important decisions in a democratic manner. This democratic attitude fostered a spirit of togetherness and commitment on the part of Lewis's fellow explorers.

Combined: *Allowing his men to make important decisions in a democratic manner, Lewis fostered a spirit of togetherness and commitment among his fellow explorers.*

6) Using Absolute Phrases to Connect Ideas

Perhaps the most elegant — and most misunderstood — method of combining ideas is the absolute phrase. This phrase, which is often found at the beginning of sentence, is made up of a noun (the phrase's "subject") followed, more often than not, by a participle. Other modifiers might also be part of the phrase. There is no true verb in an absolute phrase, however, and it is always treated as a parenthetical element, an introductory modifier, which is set off by a comma.

The absolute phrase might be confused with a participial phrase, and the difference between them is structurally slight but significant. The participial phrase does not contain the subject-participle relationship of the absolute phrase; it modifies the subject of the independent clause that follows. The absolute phrase, on the other hand, is said to modify the entire clause that follows. In the first combined sentence below, for instance, the absolute phrase modifies the subject Lewis, but it also modifies the verb, telling us "under what conditions" or "in what way" or "how" he disappointed the world. The absolute phrase thus modifies the entire subsequent clause and should not be confused with a dangling participle, which must modify the subject which immediately follows. Examples:

Lewis's fame and fortune was virtually guaranteed by his exploits. Lewis disappointed the entire world by inexplicably failing to publish his journals.

Combined: *His fame and fortune virtually guaranteed by his exploits, Lewis disappointed the entire world by inexplicably failing to publish his journals.*

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Effective sentences will be easily understood and will interest the readers. They are not cluttered with obscurities, irrelevancies or excessive details. To avoid these things, the ideas in two or more sentences can bring into one simple sentence by combining them. From this very simple analysis, it is evident that many students had problems to make effective composition. Firstly, they tend to use many repetition words, phrases, or clauses in expressing their ideas. Secondly, they used some unnecessary words which made their sentences long and verbose. Moreover, they placed too much emphasis on presenting their ideas so that it sometimes obscured the central thought. Many ways can be used to convert the uneconomical sentences into more economical ones. The ways are such as by the use of conjunctions, by the use of relative clauses, by the use of passive constructions, by the use of punctuations, and many others. In evaluating the students' composition, the researcher found that most students did not think of any coordinate conjunctions between ideas in their sentences which caused circumlocutions happened. They did not use any transitional words to link the ideas together. One thought was

not connected to the previous one. They also expanded their ideas using longer expressions so the sentences were wordy and verbose. Very often Bahasa Indonesia, as their mother tongue, influenced their sentences. An analysis of circumlocutions plays an important role for both students and teachers. For students, it can help them not to repeat or use some unnecessary words. Thus it aids students in writing good sentences after they learn how to correct these circumlocutions. For teachers, they can concentrate on the materials in which most students made errors. A teacher can also evaluate himself whether he succeeds in teaching or not; and finally he can improve his technique in teaching by preparing systematic material.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to give my sincere gratitude to Universitas Amikom Purwokerto for their kind support to this research.

REFERENCES

- Alfaki, I. M. (2015). University Students' English Writing Problems: Diagnosis and Remedy. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, 3(3), 40–52. <http://www.eajournals.org/wp-content/uploads/University-Students---English-Writing-Problems-Diagnosis-and-Remedy.pdf>
- Dewi, N. P. F. D. dkk. (2016). Learning Difficulties Writing Short Story Skills for Ixc Grade Students of SMP Negeri 3 Singaraja, 2016 Academic Year. *e-Journal Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, Undiksha, Vol: 5*(1).
- Hermayawati. (2010). Analisis Kesulitan Belajar Bahasa Inggris Mahasiswa. *Jurnal Sosio-Humaniora*, 1(1).
- Karini, Z. (2019). The Design of Learning Methods for Reading Comprehension. *IJECA (International Journal of Education and Curriculum Application)*, 2(3), 10. <https://doi.org/10.31764/ijeca.v2i3.2112>
- Kirom, S. (2019). Peningkatan Kemampuan Menulis Artikel Ilmiah melalui Strategi Pembelajaran Berbasis Kecerdasan Verbal Linguistik. *Silampari Bisa: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Bahasa Indonesia, Daerah, dan Asing*, 2(2), 204–226. <https://doi.org/10.31540/silamparibisa.v2i2.616>
- Megawati, F. (2016). Kesulitan Mahasiswa dalam Mencapai Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Secara Efektif. *PEDAGOGIA: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 5(2), 147. <https://doi.org/10.21070/pedagogia.v5i2.246>
- Mubarak, Z. H., Hamzah, & Radjab, D. (2013). An analysis of students' ability in building Cohesion and Coherence in Argumentative Essays written by The Fourth Year Students of English Department at University of Bengkulu. *English Language Teaching (ELT)*, 1(3), 23–35.
- Munirah. (2015). Pengembangan Keterampilan Menulis Paragraf. *Depublish*.
- Puspitaloka, N., & Wahyuna, Y. T. (2018). Kesulitan-Kesulitan Yang Dihadapi Mahasiswa Piaud Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris. *AWLADY: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak*, 4(2), 120. <https://doi.org/10.24235/awlady.v4i2.3071>
- Rahmawati, E. L., & Thalia, N. (2012). Upaya Meningkatkan Kemampuan Menulis Ilmiah Mahasiswa S1 Fisioterapi UMS Dengan Metode Kolaborasi Pada Tahun Akademik 2012/2013. *Jurnal Penelitian Humaniora*, 13(2), 178–189.
- Suardani, L. (2019). Meningkatkan Minat & Hasil Belajar Siswa dalam Berkomunikasi Bahasa Inggris melalui Metode Role Play pada Mata Pelajaran Memproses Reservasi Siswa. *Journal of Education Action Research*, 3(1), 60. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jear.v3i1.17090>
- Sugiyono. (2012). Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R & D. Bandung: Alfabeta. *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R & D. Bandung: Alfabeta*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>

- Sulaiman, R., & Muhajir, M. (2019). The Difficulties Of Writing Scientific Work At The English Education Students. *Journal of English Education*, 4(1), 54-60. <https://doi.org/10.31327/jee.v4i1.923>
- Suryana. (2012). Metodologi Penelitian : Metodologi Penelitian Model Praktis Penelitian Kuantitatif dan Kualitatif. In *Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13398-014-0173-7.2>
- Widiyanto, S. (2017). Peranan Soft Skill Dan Minat Baca Terhadap Kemampuan Menulis Eksposisi Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Indonesia. *Semantik*, 6(2), 31. <https://doi.org/10.22460/semantik.v6i2.p31-38>