SOURCE-BASED WRITING AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS: STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE AND CHALLENGES

Velayeti Nurfitriana Ansas[1], Didi Sukyadi[2]
Korean Education Study Program[1], English Education Department[2], Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

velaansas@upi.edu

Abstract

The level of scientific publications of Indonesian students at the international level is still very minimal. Even when compared to Malaysia and Thailand, Indonesia is still lagging behind. The Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education targets that in 2019 Indonesia will reach 30,000 international publications. Therefore, students' interest in writing must be increased, especially writing based on sources. Therefore, this study would like to find students' perspectives and perceived challenges in writing based on sources. This research was based on a case study. The research involved 68 students from one of the state universities in Bandung, and it analyzed 20 selected scientific papers written by students. The instruments for data collection included questionnaire and observation. The results of this study found that 59% of students perceived that writing scientific papers is very difficult. The students found it difficult to find suitable sources for writing material and develop their ideas. They tended to use articles as the sources from the internet whose originality is unclear. One reason this happens was because 80% of students did not know where to find or get indexed journals to use as references for their writing. In addition, many students also preferred not to use journals that were majorly English-based because of their limitation of English skills. The implication is that students should be given further understanding of how to access journals and use reference sources in writing. It is expected that every lecturer will give more source-based writing assignments so that the ability of students to write and develop ideas based on existing sources can be further improved.

Keywords: scientific paper, source-based writing, teaching writing, writing

INTRODUCTION
In language learning, there are four skills that must be mastered by students, including listening, speaking, reading and writing. McDonough and Shaw (2003) interpreted that listening, speaking, reading and writing skills were not isolated skills, but they are interrelated and altogether used to improve communication in the classroom. In his research, Hartley (2007) mentions that the four language skills will be interrelated, especially for foreign language learners; hence, it is not possible to teach one skill of a foreign language without the other skills. For instance, reading is considered as an integral part of writing practice in reader-response theory, writing to read, and reading to write (Hirvela, 2004). As Hirvela (2004) contends, during reading to write process, reading acts as the provider of the needed input in writing tasks that may encompass the knowledge of rhetorical, linguistic, and/or stylistic information. Therefore, students' writing activities will be in influenced by their reading skills, and this is especially true in the case of source-based writing. In this writing activity, students are required to be able to interpret the intent of the source they find to be presented in their writing. Source-based writing relies heavily on citation of secondary sources.

Citation is an important convention of academic writing. It can help writers develop ideas in their writing, either persuasively or effectively, hence increasing their credibility in writing. Citation can be viewed as "attribution of propositional content to another source" (Hyland, 2002, p. 115) and is "central to social context of persuasion" (Hyland, 1999, p. 342).

This is why the ability to write academically based on sources is considered the ultimate evidence of second language learners' successful academic writing (Gholami & Alinasab, 2017; Cumming, Kantor,

Baba, Erdosy, Eouanzoui & James, 2005; Gebril & Plakans, 2016; Guo, Crossley, & McNamara, 2013).

It is unfortunate that in Indonesian context, the level of scientific publications of students at the international level is still very minimal. Even compared to Malaysia and Thailand, we are still lagging behind (Seftiawan, 2017). The Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education targets that in 2019 Indonesia will reach 30,000 international publications. This phenomenon calls for the need to increase students' interest in writing, especially writing based on sources, such as for journal articles and other types of academic writing.

Several preliminary studies have discussed scientific writing or source-based writing from various aspects. Sormunen, Romu, Heinström, and Turunen (2012), for instance, tested a method to analyze the information sourced in writing. They argue that source-based writing assignment can be a method that helps students understand how information obtained from sources is processed into a new writing by avoiding plagiarism and heeding to the genre of their writing Sormunen Tanni Alamettälä and Heinström (2014) also investigated group work strategies that can be effective to be applied in source-based writing. The strategies include planning, searching, assessing sources, reading, writing, and editing.

Another study by Gebril and Plakans (2016) analyzed lexical diversity, textual borrowing and proficiency in students' source-based writing assignments, while Gholami and Alinasab (2017) studied source-based writing in the context of independent and integrated essays. Most of this research discusses strategies and assessment systems used in source-based writing. Meanwhile, not much research raises the perspectives of students of source-based writing activities or the challenges they perceive in this kind of writing. Therefore, this study aims at raising the perspective of students and the challenges they feel in source-based writing. By understanding their perspective and the challenges they perceive, lecturers can determine the appropriate strategies in improving student writing skills, especially in source-based writing.

METHOD
The research employed a case study method. It involved 68 second year students of the Korean Education Study Program at one of the state universities in Bandung, with 20 selected scientific papers written by the students. The Korean education program students were selected because they were the first batch students of the then newly opened Korean Education program. In addition, to this date there have only been four Korean departments or programs opened in four Indonesian universities. Hence, not much research has been conducted to these students, especially in terms of their perspectives of source-based writing.

The instrument for data collection mainly used a questionnaire with 23 questions. The questionnaire consisted of items on demographic information (5 questions), kinds of reference sources students use (7 questions), students' perspectives of writing scientific papers (5 questions), and challenges perceived by students in making scientific papers (10 questions). In addition, this study used observation guidelines to see how students use sources as material to make a scientific writing.

The results of the questionnaire were statistically described and analyzed with the help of SPSS. The thematic descriptive technique was also used to analyze the results of observations of students' selected scientific papers. Finally, interviews to selected students were conducted to further investigate their perspectives and perceived challenges of source-based writing. All parties involved have expressed their consent to be involved in this research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Demographic Information of the Participants and Results of Observation of Their Source-Based Writing
The demographic information generated from the students is focused on students' GPA in their first and second semesters of their first year of study. On average, the students participating in this research had good or satisfactory GPA. In fact, on average, there was an increase in their GPA from an average of 3.12 in the first semester to 3.21 in the second semester. Based on the GPA information, it can be inferred that the participants had good academic standing. Hence, it is expected that the students can do well in their academic writing. However, that is not the case. An observation done to selected papers written by the students shows that most students still used articles from the internet without clear authenticity, so that they were vulnerable to plagiarism. Students often did not give credits to the sources cited in their writing.

It was also found that in making source-based writing most students did not provide significant explanation for the sources they quoted. Most of them only copied without adding their own argument. Meanwhile, Wanrick and Inch (1989) argue that every opinion conveyed by the author in his or her writing must be based on concrete evidence that supports this or her opinion, so that the reader can believe the opinions that the author presents or proposes. Each statement and opinion must also produce conclusions that can be accepted by the reader.

The observation further reveals that students also did not understand how to make correct references in the references section. Most of them just wrote the website url they quoted the sources from. This finding is in line with that of Kirkpatrick & Klein (2016) who found that in some cases, students do not create any mediating documents and instead write

directly from the source documents, alternating frequently between researching, drafting, and revising.

With this finding regarding students' source-based writing skills, it is important then to understand their perspectives of this kind of writing in order to find solutions to the problems.

Students' Perspectives of Source-based Writing
Based on the results of questionnaire distributed to the students, it was found that as many as 59% of students found it difficult to make a source-based writing. As many as 33% of the students felt writing a source-based paper is very difficult, and only 15% of them felt that it was not too bad and a small number (3%) said it was easy. More specifically, they found it difficult to find and develop their own ideas. They also had difficulty in finding other people's ideas that can represent their ideas or are relevant to the problems they discuss and integrating those ideas into their study. They thought that writing source-based writing was simply moving the theory in the book into their writing.

The results of the questionnaire are confirmed by students' selected writing previously observed. So often their writing only contains expert views on a topic, rather than their own views on the topic based on the theory of experts. Students also felt that writing source-based writing was not something they had to do as students. They admitted that they made source-based writing only to fulfill assignments given as a condition to get grades. This also explains why students' publication has not been satisfactory.

Despite students' perceptions of what constitutes source-based writing and their belief in the sole academic intention of writing it, students writing a text for a university assignment are usually expected to draw from sources. In fact, lecturers attach much importance to how students integrate sources into their writing. Students' argument ability can be judged by how they can develop ideas conveyed by others at the same time. In this case, students should be able to find references quickly, in the form of either experience or knowledge they have had before. The way students integrate sources into their writing is supposed to "reflect both the utterer's voice and the voices of those from whom s/he has borrowed the text" (Scollon et al., 1998, p. 228). However, similar to the findings of the present study, most research has shown that citation presents considerable difficulties for students (Dong 1996; Mansourizadeh & Ahmad 2011; Pecorari 2003), making the students vulnerable to plagiarism, albeit mostly not deliberately done This finding is also echoed by Hyland (2002b) who attests that citation is a feature in which students mostly have difficulty to use effectively in their writing or understand correctly in their reading.

Types of References Used to Make Scientific Paper
The results of the questionnaire distributed indicate that 53% of the students often copied sources without

giving further explanations for the copied sources in relation to the topic of discussion. Only as many as 22% of students rarely used the source immediately, sometimes providing further explanations regarding the topic or argument they quoted. It was further discovered that only 3% of the students never used the source as they were and always gave explanations and other supporting evidence related to the topic or argument they quoted. Details of the finding are presented in Figure 1.
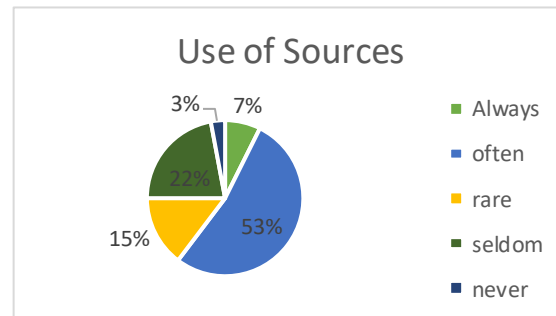

Figure 1. Students' use of resources

Figure 1 shows that according to students, source-based writing is a writing activity in which they are to copy all the writings in the sources they found into their writing. This is certainly a misconception.

The questionnaire items further investigated students' perspective of the role of resource use. It was revealed that students mostly felt that the presence of resources could help them develop their ideas. This was illustrated by 44% of the students feeling that resources were sufficient to help them develop ideas, 34% felt resources helped them to develop ideas, and 10% felt that resources really helped them develop ideas. Only 9% of the students felt that sources did not help them in developing their ideas. See Figure 2 for more detailed data.
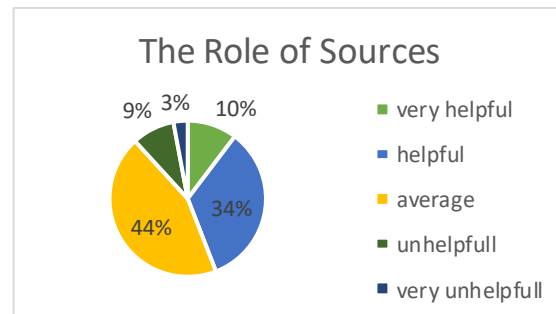

Figure 2. Students' Perspectives of the Role of Resources

In this context, sources in writing based on text are texts or other works that can be used to develop writing ideas or to support claims made by the author (the sources used in writing are referred to as references). In order to be able to use the sources well, the author must be able to identify the types of

sources used and adjust them to their own purpose of writing. By classifying the types of sources used, the author can identify how their arguments are related to or can be supported by the information they get from these sources. When writing, students are required to be able to assess and determine which sources are appropriate to use in their writing.

The ability to use sources appropriately is a part of cultural literacy, which can be defined being capable not only of writing, reading and communicating, but also of doing these responsibly (Hirsch, 1987). Similar to the idea of writing responsible, in the context of cultural literacy relevant to source-based writing, the ability to read also includes the ability to interpret a text and also to be able to re-communicate what is in the text to others meaningfully. Students with high literacy can also sort out and choose the reading text to read. It may be that the high level of plagiarism in Indonesia and also the easily spreading hoax news is caused by students' lack of ability in reading responsibly. In this globalized era, students should be able to filter and find out the truth from the information read before they re-communicate the news to public.

The present study further discovered that in making source-based writing, as many as 47% of the students used secondary sources in the forms of journal articles. However, most of the articles cited were not from reputable journals. Observations of students' writing confirmed this finding, showing that sometimes the articles cited by students have no clear sources, such as the author, year of publication, etc. 21% of the students used textbooks as a source in their writing, and only 19% of the students use indexed journals as the source of their writing. This illustrates that the students still lacked knowledge regarding how to find and cite reputable journal articles. The results of interview were in line with the finding. Students admitted they did not know where they could look for journals or how to do so. Therefore, they only used search pages like Google to find sources. They also had difficulty in choosing which sources are credible to use. These have caused students to be vulnerable to plagiarism.

Perceived Challenges Writing Source-Base Writing
Based on the researcher's observation of students' selected source-based writing produced in their first and second semesters, more than 75% of the sources used in writing the paper were taken from various websites, whose credibility and reliability is questionable. The interview reveals that many students looked for the sources using one of the famous search engines, *google*. In addition, they did not give credit to the sources they cited. It can be said then that the level of plagiarism among students was very high. Students seemed reluctant or most probably not understand how to use accredited books or journal articles as their source of literature. Since the students had problems even in finding reliable sources to support their arguments in their writing, it is only

understandable that they had more difficulty in developing their ideas and arguments based on the sources cited.

In their study, Alister, Conttia, & Hyeyoon (2016) reported that educators believed that the challenge for a student when writing for academic purposes was to effectively develop the information they got from the source and put it well into writing so as not to change the information they had obtained. They further reported that in developing ideas, student used claims. Each claim made by students is supported by evidence. Their study found five factors that may help students tackle the challenges in source-based writing: (1) students lack experience in writing activities, but they try to use writing strategies. The more often students write, their more likely their abilities will increase; (2) prior knowledge of students about the source of writing can help them in developing the information obtained, so that every claim they make in writing can be strengthened by more evidence; (3) differences will arise when understanding sources using their L1 or L2 languages; (4) student writing results are influenced by the type of task and the type of source they must use when writing; and (5) giving instructions or additional explanations from instructors can help them develop the ability to use resources in their writing.

Other challenges perceived by students in source-based writing include finding appropriate books related to their discussion topic. Many of them were reluctant to go to the library and borrow books for their writing. Many were even unwilling to buy relevant textbooks, not only for their writing, but also for the courses in general. It was also unfortunate that students only knew the university library, while there were other libraries, such as those owned and managed by the municipal and provincial governments.

Solutions to Improve Source-Based Writing Skills
The results of this study show urgency to seriously address the issue of cultural literacy among students. The quality of education in Indonesia will be reflected in the cultural literacy of its people, in this case its students. Cultural literacy is, once again, not only concerned with reading, but also in writing responsibly.

Drawing upon the results of this study, the following solutions are recommended:
First is optimization of library's functions. Library is a center for study. In Library, students can find various sources of all things. It is important for lecturers to promote learning activities which can encourage students to visit the library. In this case, lecturers' role is required to encourage their students to do library research more frequently. From this research activity, students will get encouraged to visit the library to find some references. Besides, lecturers are expected not to limit the learning sources only on one or two books. Lecturers should encourage students to read as many source books as necessary to support their study or

writing topic. This is necessary for learning activity, so that students can find other sources and not only focus on one theory. The library meant here does not only refer to that in the university, but also included other libraries, i.e. regional library and state library which can be accessed online.

Second is the optimization of learning groups. Learning group is a study center which provides a place for students to distribute creative ideas and put them into research. Learning group can consist of students based on their interest in a certain research field. In this group, students get opportunity to learn how to develop their research reports into journal articles and students can also collaborate with lecturer to make research (Sormunen, 2014).

In the case of Korean Education Study Program under research, the study program has created a learning center called Korean Studies Research Center (KSRC). KSRC was established to be a place for researchers, either lecturers or students, to produce research that is publishable in accredited journals, both nationally and internationally. With the KSCR, it is expected that students of the Korean Education Study Program under study develop their ideas in elaborating Korean Studies or other relevant fields so that their cultural literacy can be improved in answering the demand for the growing of publication in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

Source-based writing in the perspective of students is an activity that is fairly difficult to do. They often find it difficult to find sources that are relevant to the topic they want to write. They find it even more difficult to relate the sources to their own ideas and develop their argument based on the sources. These difficulties are rooted in students' lack of knowledge of how to find the appropriate sources and lack of training on how to make source-based writing. Hence, lecturers should be able to encourage students to write based on sources and to equip them with the necessary skills.

The solutions offered include optimizing the library as the center of learning and group learning. The group learning can be with classmates or other students across program or batch facilitated by learning centers, such as the KSRC. These two strategies along with encouragement, support, and supervision from the lecturers can improve students' source-based writing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

REFERENCES

Alister, C., Conttia, L., & Hyeyoon, C. (2016). Students' writing from sources for academic purposes: A synthesis of recent research. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *23*, 47-58.

Cumming, A., Kantor, R., Baba K., Erdosy, U., Eouanzoui K., & James M. (2005). Differences in written discourse in writing-only and reading-to-write prototype tasks for next generation TOEFL. *Assessing Writing, 10*, 5-43.

Gebril, A., & Plakans, L. (2016). Source-based tasks in academic writing assessment: Lexical diversity, textual borrowing and proficiency. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 24*, 78-88. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2016.10.001

Gholami, J., & Alinasab, M. (2017). Source-based tasks in writing independent and integrated essays. *International Journal of Instruction, 10*(3), 127-142. https://doi.org/10.12973/iji.2017.1039a

Guo, L., Crossley, A. S., & McNamara, S. D. (2013). Predicting human judgments of essay quality in both integrated and independent second language writing samples: A comparison study. Assessing Writing, *18*, 218-238. doi: 10.1016/j.asw.2013.05.002.

Hartley, J. (2007). Reading, writing, speaking and listening: Perspectives in applied linguistics. *Applied Linguistics, 28*(2), 316-320. doi: 10.1093/applin/amm014.

Hirvela, A. (2004). Connecting Reading and Writing In Second Language Writing Instruction. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Hirsch, E.D. (1987). *Cultural literacy: What every American needs to know. With an appendix what literate Americans know*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Hyland, K. (1999). Academic attribution: citation and the construction of disciplinary knowledge *Applied Linguistics, 20*(3), 341–367. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/20.3.341

Hyland, K. (2002). Activity and evaluation: Reporting practices in academic writing, in J. Flowerdew (ed.), *Academic Discourse* (pp. 115–130). London: Longman.

Kirkpatrick, L. C., & Klein, P. D. (2016). High-achieving high school students' strategies for writing from internet-based sources of information. *Journal of Writing Research*, *8*(1), 1-46. doi: 10.17239/jowr-2016.08.01.01.

Mansourizadeh, K. & Ahmad U. K. (2011). Citation practices among non-native expert and novice scientific writers, *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 10*, 152–161. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2011.03.004

McDonough, J., & Shaw, C. (2003). Materials And Methods in ELT: A Teachers' Guide. Australia: Blackwell Publishing.

Pecorari, D. (2003). Good and original: Plagiarism and patchwriting in academic second language writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing,* 12, 317–345. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2003.08.004

Scollon, R., Tsang, W.K., Li, D., Yung, V. & Jones, R., (1998). Voice, appropriation and discourse representation in student writing task. *Linguistics and Education 9*(3), 227–250. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0898-5898(97)90001-2

Seftiawan, D. (August 1, 2017). Jumlah publikasi ilmiah Indonesia peringkat 3 ASEAN. *Pikiran Rakyat.* Retrieved from: http://www.pikiran-rakyat.com/pendidikan/2017/08/01/jumlah-publikasi-ilmiah-indonesia-peringkat-3-asean-406475

Sormunen, E., Heinström, J., Romu, L., & Turunen, R. (2012). A method for the analysis of information use in source-based writing. Information Research, *17*(4), paper 535. Retrieved from http://InformationR.net/ir/17-4/paper535.htmlSormunen,E.,&Lehtiö,L.(2011).AuthoringWikipediaarticlesasaninformationliteracy assignment–copy-pastingorexpressingnewunderstandinginone'sownwords?InformationResearch,16(4).Retrievedfromhttp://informationr.net/ir/164/paper503.html

Sormunen, E., Tanni, M., Alamettala, T., & Heinstrom, J. (2014). Students' group work strategies in source-based writing assignments. *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Thechnology*, *65*(6), 1217-1231.

Warnick, B., & Inch, E. S. (1989). *Critical thinking and communication: The use of reason in argument*. New York: Macmillan.