

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

Writing is a type of communication used to convey an idea or concept of thinking, although it is not always limited to the expression of one's own opinion without supporting proof or facts. In order to communicate the facts, a scholarly research article, for instance, necessitates extensive analysis in addition to arguments. Therefore, in order to write quality academic research papers such as journals, term papers, or theses one must become proficient in writing since the results of researcher's ideas must be arranged in a scientific and methodical method. Additionally, these lengthy essays become essential for obtaining a formal education degree or advancing on to a higher education level. In this instance, the researcher must conduct research before writing the academic paper.

Mutimani (2016) argues that academic writing is an essential component that helps university students learn the appropriate tone, style, and approach for the assignments they have. Not all countries in the world require every student at university to carry out research that will be published in academic writing. In Indonesia, academic writing cannot be separated from university students. Almost all universities in Indonesia require students to carry out research that will be written in the form of academic writing as a graduation requirement. The majority of universities require students to carry out research written in the form of a thesis, but there are also universities that carry out research in the form of scientific journal publications.

Christine (1992) stated that academic writing should exclude personal viewpoint in order to be neutral. Therefore, acquiring writing abilities for producing academic papers requires familiarity with certain concepts, such as reading comprehension and vocabulary mastery. However, using paraphrase as a strategi when writing academic papers is also a sort of writing competence. According to Rogerson and McCarthy (2017), academic writing relies heavily on the skill of paraphrasing to demonstrate that the researcher can capture the substance of what they have read, that they comprehend what they have read, and that they can utilize adequately cited evidence to back their views.

One of the most essential methods in academic writing is paraphrasing, which involves restating other ideas, meaning, and information by changing the wording of a text in a way that is notably distinct from the original source without altering the content. According to Bailey (2011), one way to prevent plagiarism is to practice paraphrasing. Murphy (2009) states that the majority of plagiarism is the delivery or usage of another researcher's ideas and information without giving proper credit. It is considered an offense in academics. At the academic domain, concepts and inventions are regarded as the exclusive property of the person who originated them. As a result, it is crucial that all students understand what defines plagiarism and how to avoid it in their works. To explain it simply, students need to become proficient in paraphrasing in order to produce good academic writing.

Students need to know paragraph first before creating a good academic writing since the paragraphs are part of academic writing. A paragraph is an arrangement of sentences with a core concept and several supporting ideas.

Furthermore, a paragraph is an arrangement of phrases that cooperate to establish a core theme, according to Chynthia (2001). According to Cynthia (2001), a paragraph is structured into three primary parts: a topic sentence that introduces the paragraph, a body that elaborates on the topic sentence and the primary concept, and a concluding sentence that restates the paragraph's key theme.

Most English learners attempt to paraphrase appropriately to demonstrate that they have comprehended the original material's concepts, but they must also demonstrate that the facts or ideas they provide are not their own. In reality, students view paraphrase as a difficult skill in academic writing as Gilmore (2008) states, "the problem with paraphrasing, frankly, is that most students don't do it well". Puspita (2019) argues that the most difficult aspect for English students is the linguistic aspect. Many of them struggle with paraphrasing outside sources in accordance with accepted processes. Couding and Vasquez (2022) explained that there are some difficulties that students generally face i.e. altering the word class of words in content, Identifying relevant synonyms or similar phrases, Considering technical phrases that have no equivalents, altering the sentence's structure and information order, and maintaining the content of the original.

Students, particularly students of the English Education Study Program of Medan State University, should be able to grasp and use the paraphrasing requirements to produce a proper academic writing such as proposal, thesis, etc. However, paraphrase involves more than just rearranging a text's words or a passage's ideas: it also involves restating other ideas in one's own words while maintaining the original meaning of the sources. Paraphrasing is not simply

sentence replacement to make the target text appear different from the original. According to Vila, Bertran, Mart, and Rodriguez (2015), paraphrasing involves a number of different linguistic representations.

Based on the observation, the researcher used a test to take the data from students English Education Study Program of Medan State University who have taken scientific writing class. The test is used to retrieve paraphrase data from students. In the test used, researchers use one paragraph from the journal, as an example of academic writing. Researchers used a journal written by Ismiati & Erlin Pebriantika (2019) entitled *Designing Strategies for University Students' Writing Skills*.

According to McCarthy, Guess, and McNamara's (2009) three-dimensional model of paraphrase evaluation, semantic completeness, lexical similarity, and syntactic similarity are the three variables which determine if a paraphrase qualifies as a proper paraphrase. As a result, creating a paraphrase requires employing techniques focused on obtaining suitable lexical substitutions and grammatical modifications that maintain the original meaning.

Table 1.1 Students' Paraphrasing

Name	Lexical examination	Syntactic examination	Semantic examination
Student 1	0.6/1 (Fair to poor - Not Pass)	0.49/1 (Very poor - Not Pass)	0.6/1 (Fair to poor - Not pass)
Indicators	One or two synonyms are inappropriate; technical terms are left intact for clarity.	New grammatical structure does not reflect the original content. Many errors make comprehension difficult	New grammatical structure does not reflect the original content. Many errors make comprehension difficult
Student 2	0.38/1 (Very poor - Not pass)	0.35/1 (Very poor - Not pass)	0.43/1 (Very poor - Not pass)
Indicators	Errors in lexical changes lead to inaccurate/unclear content. technical terms are replaced by unclear expressions.	New grammatical structure does not reflect the original content. many errors make comprehension difficult.	Leaves out most of the original content; demonstrates misreading

Based on the result of the students' paraphrase the researcher found that the results of the two students' paraphrasing, neither can be considered as passing paraphrase in all elements of paraphrasing. From the three paraphrasing elements, Syntactic Similarity is the element with the lowest value because the assessment of this element consists of sentence structure, changes in word classes and changes in the order of sentence information. It can be concluded that there are still problems in paraphrasing students and also need to know that these poor results can occur because students face difficulties in paraphrasing. For this reason the researcher conducted this research entitled "University Students' Ability in Paraphrasing Academic Paragraph at English Education Department of Medan State University".

### **B. The problems of the Study**

Based on the identification of the problem above, the problem of the study is formulated as the following:

1. How is the ability of students' in paraphrasing academic paragraph at English Education Study Program of Medan State University?
2. What difficulties do students in English Education Study Program of Medan State University face in paraphrasing academic paragraph?

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

In line with the two problems that have been raised above, the objectives of this study can be described as following:

1. To analyze the ability of students' in paraphrasing academic paragraph at English Education Study Program of Medan State University
2. To identify the difficulties students at English Education Study Program of Medan State University face in paraphrasing academic paragraph

#### **D. The Scope of the Study**

This study only focus on the ability of students' paraphrasing academic paragraph and what the difficulties the students of English Education Study Program of Medan State University face in paraphrasing academic paragraph.

#### **E. The Significances of the Study**

The findings of the study are expected to give theoretical and practical contributions, as following:

1. Theoretically

The results of this study are expected to provide new insight and knowledge for next related study.

2. Practically

- a. For lecturer

By knowing the students' paraphrasing ability and their difficulties in paraphrasing, the lecturers are expected find out the effective way to solve it.

- b. For Student

This study provide the student insight and knowledge how to how is proper academic writing paraphrasing and the difficulties might be faced in creating the quality academic paragraph.