

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and clarifies several prominent parts, such as the background of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and scope and limitation.

1.1 Background of The Study

In essence, humans, as social creatures, need other people to survive. To create harmonious relationships between people, humans need media to communicate. Language is a medium that has a crucial role in the existence of society. There is a wide range of languages according to ethnic groupings around the world. The power of a language connects every person everywhere. Through language, humans can convey and express their thoughts, opinions, and feelings to others. By using decent and veritable language, humans can erect rules, as well as maintain culture and harmonious relationships between fellow humans.

Moreover, language is not only spoken but also written. Writing is a medium for humans to communicate in the form of sentences/paragraphs. Oshima and Hogue (2006) claim that writing is a process that helps us generate thoughts or considerations, clarify our opinions or beliefs, and sort through evidence that proves our beliefs are correct. Writing is categorized as a productive skill. Writing is described as a skill that has many exercises to develop. Writing is a complex process. This means that the ability to write can be achieved through repetition, trial, error, and reinforcement. It involves mastering all elements of the target language, such as organisation, content, grammar, punctuation, spelling, mechanics, and also style and quality of expression. Moreover, academic writing is an essential element during a student's academic years. Davis & Liss (2006) emphasize that academic writing is very important for presenting students' arguments in a logical sequence and for arriving at conclusions.

An essay is a group of paragraphs written about a certain topic and has a transparent main idea. In an essay, there is no stipulation for the number of paragraphs. In other words, there is no limit to the length of paragraphs in writing an academic essay. the important point is how to make our writing understandable

to the reader, provided that it is in accordance with the criteria and can explain a particular topic logically from any perspective (Zinsser, 2001). According to Zemach (2009), a descriptive essay is a text that describes a certain object, such as a person, thing, or specific place. It means that descriptive essays contain instructions and explanations that make readers imagine actual objects so that they can feel as if they have seen or felt an experience directly.

Writing a descriptive essay is basic and becomes a crucial skill in personal, professional, and academic contexts (Marue & Pantas, 2019). In academic settings, the ability to construct descriptive essays that express a person, place, experience, emotion, or some particular object and use sensory details to create a vivid image in the mind of the reader. In academic writing, learning descriptive essays as a primary sub-material enhances their writing skills. The reason is to measure the ability of students to analyse several objects in a social environment, such as humans, things, places, and so on. Descriptive learning allows the students to organize information on specific objects.

In terms of characteristics, each essay tends to have similar characteristics, but there are also significant differences. Descriptive essays must be written using the present tense and can explain an object in detail to the reader. According to Zemach (2009), descriptive essays have a generic structure. Generic structure refers to a typical pattern organisation in describing a specific object. Discussing generic structure in depth is necessary that needs to be done because it helps writers make it easier to organize essays logically, develop the writer's thoughts and perspectives, and ensure that all the important aspects of the object are covered in the essay. In other words, generic structure provides a framework that helps the writer and reader understand how the essay is structured. In general, there are three generic structures of descriptive essays, namely, introduction or identification, body paragraph or description, and conclusion. For example, cats are used as objects of writing, and the identification is in the form of the opening section, where the writer provides basic essential information, usually in the form of the name of the subject. A description where the writer provides a detailed and vivid portrayal of the object in the form of physical characteristics. Conclusion, where the writer provides a final impression of an object.

In descriptive essays, generic structure and lexicogrammatical features have a close correlation. The correlation between generic structure and linguistic features in a descriptive essay is necessary to convey a clear and exciting picture of the subject to the reader. Its structure organises information logically, and its lexicogrammatical features make descriptions more lively, interesting, and emotional. Meanwhile, according to Gerot & Wignell (1995), lexicogrammatical features refer to the elements or characteristics of a language used to convey meaning, create emphasis, and enrich communication. Descriptive essays are arranged into five parts, namely focusing on certain objects, using simple present tenses, using noun phrases, auxiliary verbs, and linking verbs. These lexicogrammatical features will show and clarify that a descriptive essay has distinctive characteristics.

A descriptive essay is chosen as the object of analysis because the writer is interested in investigating descriptive essays as a genre utilised and implemented in teaching writing. A descriptive essay is the initial and basic capital for students to be able to express their ideas, thoughts, and imaginations in sentences or paragraphs that are simple, clear, and easy for readers to understand (Wigati, 2014). Furthermore, learning about descriptive essays helps readers to find out information in detail, enrich diction or variation vocabulary, and know other people's perspectives on a particular thing. Hence, it can facilitate communication in the form of writing.

It is essential not only when writing generic, context-neutral academic essays for writing courses but also when writing within different disciplines. One of them is an essay that explains a current issue or phenomenon. Moreover, phenomena related to Indonesia's cultural diversity. An essay on the theme of Madurese arts written by second-semester students of the English Department at Trunojoyo Madura University will be an interesting research object. The justification is that essays often feature a richness of writing style and a distinctive use of language. Studying essays can help in understanding effective writing techniques and diverse language styles. In the second semester, students take the essay writing subject, which is one of the compulsory subjects for one semester. During this time, students are expected to be able to produce favourable writing.

By analysing this essay, we will find out the students' perspectives, and also Present the local arts of Madura, which will ultimately have an impact on the introduction and development of Madurese arts as a tourism object. Furthermore, writing an essay about Madurese arts is a form of student appreciation and contribution to preserving Madurese arts by promoting it through interesting writing.

Based on the explanation above, the writer is interested in conducting a study entitled “An Analysis of Generic Structure and Lexicogrammatical Features in Essays About Madurese Art”.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study above, the following research questions are formulated as follows:

1. What are the generic structures found in essays about Madurese Art?
2. What are the lexical asp used in essays about Madurese's arts?

1.3 Objectives of The Study

Based on the statements of the research problem, the objectives of this study are:

1. To explain the generic structure found in essays about Madurese Art.
2. To explain lexicogrammatical features used in essays about Madurese Arts.

1.4 Significance of The Study

There is some expected significance to be achieved from this study, both theoretically and practically. They can be figured out as follows:

1. Theoretical significance

Theoretically, the writer expects that the result of this study is useful as one way to enrich the reference by providing knowledge or describing the generic structure and lexicogrammatical features of descriptive essays. Therefore, this study can provide a foundation for other researchers to conduct similar studies in order to improve students' problem-solving skills.

2. Practical significance

a. For the students

Students are expected to become more courageous in expressing their feelings during the writing and learning process. In addition, students can know their weaknesses when practising English in written form. They can realise that writing in English requires proficiency. They also understand that theory is important, but practice is even more important in mastering English skills, especially writing skills. Moreover, this study could be useful for adding insights into the generic structure and lexicogrammatical features of descriptive essays and implicating it as a reference for learning about genre.

b. For the teachers

It is expected to provide useful contributions to English teachers to help them teach their students about writing skills. This analysis will have a positive impact on both teachers and students. Furthermore, teachers will easily decide on certain strategies to apply in the teaching and learning process. Hence, this study can be used as an alternative learning media, especially for teachers.

c. For other researchers

This study can be utilised by other researchers as a guide or reference in developing further research in the field of linguistics, especially genre, particularly regarding the analysis of the generic structure and lexicogrammatical features of descriptive essays.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The scope of this study is genre analysis, especially about the generic structure and lexicogrammatical features of descriptive essays. To investigate existing problems, the writer used the theory stated by Zemach & Lisa (2009) in analysing generic structures and the theory stated by Gerot & Wignell (1995) in analysing lexicogrammatical features in descriptive essays. This study is limited to discussing ten essays written by second-semester students of the English Study Program at Universitas Trunojoyo Madura in the academic year of 2022/2023.