CHALLENGES IN LEARNING ACADEMIC WRITING: EFL STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS

Abstract
Academic writing plays an important role in EFL learning. This takes much effort and forces students to think critically. Many students face the challenge during academic writing practices. It attracts the researcher’s attention to investigate what challenges students face in learning academic writing practices. Hence, this study aims to investigate challenges in learning academic writing, particularly their perception. The researcher conducted an investigation based on the research question: “What are the challenges of undergraduate students in learning academic writing?” and “What are undergraduate students’ ways to overcome the challenges in learning academic writing?” The participants of the study were 66 students who took Research Design class. They were students of the English Language Education Program at FLA-UKSW who were in batch 2015. The data was collected by spreading the questionnaire. The data analysis consists of what challenges may appear in students in order to pass the course and the way to overcome the challenges.

Keywords: academic writing, practices, investigate, the challenges, overcome, EFL students’ perception

INTRODUCTION
Academic writing is a skill that is required in academic settings, particularly in learning and teaching EFL. As Hyland (2002) stated, that Academic writing in English at college levels would be different from lower levels education. The structure will be more complex and the language will be more academic. Academic writing becomes a difficult skill for learners. Students at university are faced with a new and unfamiliar context of learning, they have to struggling in order to succeed in writing academic paper (Badenhorst, 2011).
Although writing is a challenging task, EFL learners should consider that academic writing is important. It helps students to do the essays throughout university. Academic writing is important because it is more focus on the topic and content. In college life, students started to be introduce with essays. Through academic writing, they will learn about the topic of academic writing and the technique of how to write academic writing. Furthermore, academic writing practices force students to look on the idea and analyze the idea from different perspective.

Latif (2007) mentioned that students’ difficulties in writing could be varied, such as grammatical errors, students lack of understand and analyze data, less practice and their background knowledge. Nofal (2010) stated that students felt the difficulties in express themselves in writing. Students also lack of knowledge especially in using transitional words such as: however and moreover and some phrases like in fact, on the other hand, etc.

In order to know the problem, this study would help the students by identifying the difficulties in academic writing practices. This study would investigate what aspects that make students feel burdened or down in writing practices. This includes challenges in order to know the level of students’ difficulty in learning academic practices. More specifically, it is aimed to answer these research questions: (1) What are the challenges of undergraduate students in learning academic writing? (2) What are undergraduate students’ ways to overcome the challenges in learning academic writing?
This current study can be beneficial for EFL students who would have experienced in doing academic writing practices. Through this research, it would help students to recognize their level of difficulty. They would recognize the challenges in facing academic writing practices and find out students’ perspective in academic writing practices. Moreover, students also can discover how they overcome the challenges.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Meaning of Academic Writing

Academic writing was a skill focus on writing, to fulfill requirement especially in the academic setting (Mutimani, 2016). Academic writing is used in the specific areas of expertise. Mutimani also mentioned about the formal tone, focus on the research problem, and precise the word choice are the characteristic of academic writing. This is designed to convey the meaning of the idea and concepts for students and experts. Students, teachers, experts, and researchers are connected to academic writing to convey ideas or making some arguments. Academic writing is the kind of writing that considering students’ ability in maintaining the ideas and arguments and combining the idea in English for academic setting for academic success (Hyland, 2007). According to Arkoudis and Tran (2007), academic writing takes apart for academic success for students.

Academic writing has its own rules and to be successful in this field, practices are one of the best ways. The rules should be organized in a formal way. It must be
connected to the author and the literature (Rass, 2015). Academic writing has a special style in writing. According to Hogue (2007), the style of writing in academic writing should contain experts’ research which is different with other styles of writing. Hogue also mentioned that the language used should be more academic than other styles of writing. The language should be formal and polite. This style could be seen as part of students in college or university levels. According to Morley- Warner (2009), Academic Writing has a good structure by using formal vocabulary and grammar.

The Importance of Academic Writing

Fujii and Fukao (2001) argued that understanding academic writing was important in the future since academic writing brings a great influence for students in college or students with higher education. It is necessary for students to understand the practice of academic writing. Hogue (2007) stated that the practice is more demanding to force students more critically and rational, rather than creative writing or narrative writing. These practices play an important role, to recognize the aspect of academic writing practices.

Academic writing assist student to analyze. Students have to know the challenges in order to not hamper students in writing research in the future. They have to recognize their level of difficulties and did not experience the same error.

Difficulties in Second Language Academic Writing
In a linguistic area, writing in the second language is growing up so fast (Matsuda, 2003). Writing in second language (English) becomes something needed in an academic area. If students can write well using their mother tongue, it means that students also can write the second language well (Kobayashi & Rinnert 2008). In addition, practice of writing in the second language can be influenced in L1 because of the background knowledge of the mother tongue and it depends on their own culture. Kubota (1998) added that someone got the difficulties on writing in L2, they could also feel same difficulties when they were writing in L1. On the other hand, some researchers have their own opinion about this, even though writing either in L1 or L2, the strategies would be different.

**Academic Writing Challenges**

According to Jordan (2012), one of the challenge that are faced by students is write the assignment in academic aspect. The fact is, to produce the best result in academic writing, it needed critical thinking, focus discipline, and full concentration. Leibowitz (2004) mentioned about one challenge, which is students feel difficulty in expressing ideas in English, especially in academic setting properly. They are not accustomed to producing the formal language before they enter the college. Since in college, especially in academic writing practices, students are expected to use English formal correctly and critically.

Many lecturers proved that most of undergraduate learners find academic writing challenging. They lack of mastery of academic issues and a good grasp of
grammar. According to Myles (2002), there were two main factors that caused errors in academic writing: cognitive factors and social factors. McLaughlin (1988) argued that cognitive complex was part of academic writing practices, the more you understand about the discourse style and the acquisition of academic vocabulary, allows you to master the mastery in L2. Myles concluded that social factors were determining L2 writing since learners still produce errors because: showing negative attitudes towards L2, lack of motivation, and environment that do not help them in learning L2. It can consider as students’ willingness in learning academic writing. Students’ willingness can affect the result of learning academic writing.

**Previous Studies on Problems in Academic Writing**

In 2008, Zuhour Bani Younes & Fatima Salamh Albawi did a research in Saudi Arabia about the students’ problems when they should write in English about an academic setting. They collected data using both questionnaire and interview to investigate student’s suggestion how to overcome the problem in academic writing practices. Forty students participated in this study. They were asked to write a paragraph related to academic setting and answer a questionnaire provided by the researcher. In regard to succeeding their writing skills, the findings found that most of the students were dealing in grammatical problem, expressing the ideas and lack of diction (the use of academic words or phrases) or using the formal English. Most of the students in Saudi Arabia also felt difficulty in tenses and express the idea about academic setting. The common grammatical error found by the researcher is present
progressive tense. The researchers also found students’ lack of using appropriate academic style. Even small thing like putting the correct punctuation still being problems for the students. Shoebottom (2016) mentions that not only ESL students have a serious part on punctuation, native speakers have the same problems.

Hind Al-Fadda led a study in Saudi Arabia to determine the difficulties King Saud University students encounter while learning English in academic setting. In 2011, fifty postgraduate students were given questionnaire. The findings found that ESL students in King Saud University face many difficulties while writing in the academic setting, they also felt stressed. The difficulties are faced such as reviewing the grammar. Since they still find it difficult. Another difficulty is writing an outline before writing a draft. They faced the challenges such as planning writing assignment.

In 2016, Mutimani conducted a research in University of Nambia about challenges that faced by students in academic writing. A questionnaire was distributed to 120 students and 20 lecturers. Based on this research, the findings show that students were not introduced the importance of using language academically earlier. Thus, students did not know the importance of writing in the academic setting. In addition, it hampers students’ process in learning Academic Writing. In this research, the teacher also took an important role. Teachers did not teach the students properly. As Pineteh (2012) states that most of teachers were not giving students opportunity to practice more while in the class, the teachers only gave the theory. This research also showed that five students failed to do citation. They used
the name of the author, but not the year. Besides, they do not write the sources correctly. This study found out that the students experienced in referring the sources correctly and writing references.

THE STUDY

Context of the Study

This study took place in English Language Education program Faculty of Language and Arts in Satya Wacana Christian University. The location is in Salatiga. This study was taken in FLA because the faculty has a good credibility, especially in academic writing setting. Moreover, in this faculty, the students were given tasks to write their academic paper. In learning academic writing, students were expected to improve their skills, especially in academic setting.

Participants

The participants in this research were sixty six students of English Language Education program who took Research Design class in FLA. The third-year students (2015) were selected because they have taken Academic Writing course as basic in writing and have experienced dealing with academic writing practices. These students were from seven different research design classes.

Data Instruments
To gather the data, this research approached the study quantitatively. The list of questionnaire were modified from the Academic Literacies Questionnaire by Evans & Green (2007). They were designed to know students’ level of difficulty in academic writing practices. By using questionnaires, data gained in the survey study can be explained with some reasons. Questionnaire are design to get the opinion from the participants (Griffee, 2012, p.66).

There were two sections of the questionnaire that were used on this research. The first section was “Challenges Faced in Academic Writing Practices” (22 items) and “Overcoming the Challenges in Academic Writing Practices” (6 items). The participants were put a check mark to assess the difficulty level of the challenges in academic writing practices. The scale used from 1 (very difficult) to 4 (very easy).

Data Collection

Sixty-six third-year students of English Language Education program were selected as the participants. The questionnaire was distributed in every classes and the participants were asked to complete this study by filling out the questionnaire. In addition, the researcher did interview two students to get the data more complete. The data of the questionnaire was analyzed to investigate the challenges in learning academic writing practices and recognize how the participants overcome the challenges.
Data Analysis

The researcher used content analysis after obtaining the data from the questionnaire. First, the researcher decided the most difficult challenges that chosen by the participants into three category. Second, the researcher confirmed the data from the questionnaire using the percentages and analyzed the data. In the end, after obtained the data this study related it with the way students overcome the challenge. The result of this study were used to find out the level of students’ difficulty in learning academic writing in FLA UKSW.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section will discuss two areas investigated by the study’s research questions: students’ challenges in academic writing practices and the way they overcome the challenges in academic writing practices.

Challenges in Academic Writing

This section presents about the challenges faced by the students in academic writing challenges. The result shows that most of students still struggling in academic writing writing practices. Further explanation will be explain below (see Table 1).
### Table 1. Challenges in Academic Writing Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges in Academic Writing</th>
<th>Very difficult</th>
<th>Difficult</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Easy</th>
<th>Very easy</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Using an appropriate academic style</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>2.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Writing the methodology section</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Writing the findings/analysis section</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Writing a coherent paragraph</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Expressing ideas clearly</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Expressing ideas logically</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Expressing ideas in English correctly</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Synthesizing information/ideas</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Writing the literature review</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>80.3</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Writing the discussion section</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>60.6</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>2.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Summarizing</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Paraphrasing</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Proof-reading the written assignment</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Planning the writing assignment</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Linking sentences smoothly</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Writing the abstract</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Revising written work</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Writing the introduction</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Referring to sources correctly</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Writing the conclusion</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td>2.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Writing the recommendation section</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Writing the references/bibliography</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>43.9</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>2.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sixty-six respondents from English Language Education used Likert scale. The range starts from ‘1’ represent (very difficult), 2 ‘difficult’, 3 ‘easy’, to ‘4’ (very easy) to assess students’ difficulty. The students were asked in relation to 22 aspects on academic writing practices in the questionnaire. In the analysis, the percentages of the scale ‘4’ (very easy) is combined with those of scale ‘3’ (easy), while those of scale ‘2’ (difficult) is combined with those of scale ‘1’ (very difficult). The result of
the study shows that the participants tended to believe that all aspects of academic writing practices was difficult (see Table 1).

In general the data tended to show low ratings of all the aspects examined. This is shown by the low means which are mostly below 2.5. This means students indicated to have difficulties in all of the aspects. As reported in the Table 1, students chose writing the methodology section (81.8), writing literature review (80.3%), synthetizing the information/ideas (77.3%), using appropriate academic style (74.2%), writing the findings/analysis section (69.7%) as the most challenging part in academic writing practices. The percentages refer to those who chose difficult or very difficult. However, there are writing components students saw to present less challenges. The result represented in Table 1 shows that writing conclusion (62.1%), revising written work (59.1%), referring to sources clearly (53.1%) and summarizing (51.6%) rated as very easy and easy. Despite this, it means there are still many students (around 50%) who think academic writing aspects was difficult/very difficult.

This part will be discussed into the various different aspects of writing. There are three category aspects based on the list of the questionnaire. These aspects are divided into three categories: Academic writing skills in general, pre-writing and post writing skills and academic style and writing sections.
1. Academic Writing Skills in General

This section presents students’ skills in academic writing in general. As shown by Chart I, there are 10 aspects here. The aspects that were claimed as the most difficult such as using appropriate academic style (77.3%), writing coherent paragraph (68.1%), expressing ideas clearly (53%), expressing ideas logically (51.5%), expressing ideas in correct English (51.5%), synthetizing information/ideas (77.3%), summarizing (48%), paraphrasing (67%), linking sentences smoothly (62%) and referring to sources correctly (51.5%) which is represent as very difficult/difficult. Based on the percentages, this study can conclude that basic writing skills is still needed. Moreover, practice is also take an important role. The aspects above including paraphrasing, and summarizing considered as the aspects that need skills more in academic writing. The aspects here were language-related aspect. Further explanation will be explained below the chart.
Based on Chart 1, synthetizing (77.3%) got the highest percentages of being rated as very difficult/difficult in general writing skills aspect. This means that students still struggle at combining the ideas and creating a new perspective or new ideas in their academic writing practices. It is important for the participants to try and focus at a text and understanding the text. Focus is needed in this practice. Moreover, 74.2% of student chose using appropriate academic style as difficult/very difficult. In the academic writing cases, there were still many students struggling with this aspect. Another trouble faced by the students is writing coherent paragraph (68.1%), paraphrasing (67%) and linking the sentences smoothly (62%). In academic writing practices, writing coherent paragraph and linking the sentences have similar problems. It is a fact that sometimes in writing
aspect combining the sentences will be a common problem. Furthermore, the students seems struggling in expressing their ideas clearly and logically and even expressing their ideas in English. It could be seen on the percentages (53%) and (51.5%) which represent as very difficult/difficult. This supported by Dalsky and Tajino (2007) and Bitchener and Basturkmen (2006) result’s that students faced problems in expressing the ideas and expressing the ideas in English properly. Another trouble faced by the students is summarizing (48%) and referring to sources (46.9%). It means students still having trouble with a basic writing skill. Summarizing is part of basic writing skill.

2. Pre-Writing & Post Writing Skills

This section presents students’ skills in pre-writing and post writing. The pre writing consist of planning writing assignment (54.6%) which represents as very difficult/difficult. And the post writing consist of revising written work (59.1%), proof-reading written assignment (57.5%) and writing recommendation section (43.9%) which is represent as very difficult/difficult. According to Evans and Green (2007), the components of academic writing is linked by proof-reading. It caused by the process is included in the vocabulary, grammar and the punctuation and it is not only on the improvement of content and revising written assignment. Further explanation will be explained below the chart.
The pre-writing category was taking a significant role here. All of the difficulty in this category was started on this stage. The students shall prepare everything when they wanted to start writing, especially in academic writing. If students were ready with the preparation, it will help them to survive in learning academic writing. It could be seen on the number of percentages. They have similar number between pre-writing and post writing. This means that students still struggling in learning academic writing. Some students still have not mastered enough in academic writing practices. This is supported by the fact that many students in this faculty who have not taken Research Design course.
3. Academic Style & Writing Sections

This section presents students’ skills in academic style and writing sections. These consist of writing abstract, writing introductions, writing literature review, writing methodology section, writing findings/analysis section, writing discussion section, writing conclusion and writing references/bibliography.

Chart 3. Academic Style & Writing Section

In this part category, the aspect considered as the most difficult part is writing methodology section (81.8%). It have similar number of percentage as writing literature review (80.3%). This findings is not surprising because in these two aspects are part of writing. On the other hand, there are three aspects that have very close number of percentages: writing findings (69.7%), writing abstract (63.6%) and
writing discussion (60.6%) have similar number of percentages. Besides, writing introduction (51.5) and writing references (51.5%) also have same number of percentages. Writing is considered as the most challenging part in academic writing practices. Almost half of the students struggling in writing. Students’ academic writing skills in general has an impact in this stage.

The challenges in this study were considered as the most difficult part in learning academic writing. Although some of students rated summarizing, revising written work, referring to sources correctly and writing conclusion as very easy/easy, there were still many students (around 50%) who though the aspects in academic writing are difficult.

**Overcoming the Challenges in Academic Writing Practices**

This section presents about the way to overcome the challenges in academic writing practices. Students in university level has an obligation to prepare for higher education (Meyer, 2012 & Leibowitz, 2004). Academic writing is also part of the higher education itself. To address this situation, this questionnaire was taking the way on overcoming the difficulties in academic writing practices. This part describes about the possibility that offered for the students in struggling on academic writing practices. There are six solutions provided and the result is presented in a table using percentages.
Table 2: Overcoming the Challenges in Academic Writing Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overcoming the Challenges in Academic Writing Practices</th>
<th>YES(%)</th>
<th>NO(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be persistent and try to express yourself in different ways</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take additional writing course</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>92.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write in my first language and then translate it into English</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss with the lecturer to get information on how to approach assignments</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use editors to edit my work</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek help from other classmates, for example checking the writing in English</td>
<td>78.8</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Table 2, the percentages indicate that the most important solution selected by the students are “Be persistent and try to express yourself in different ways” (95.5%). It shows that the students tried to push themselves in academic writing practices. It means students figure out their obligation. Moreover, “Discuss with the lecturer to get information on how to approach assignment” rated (89.4%). Here the teacher has an important role in academic writing practices. As Yong (2010) stated that academic writing is as a critical thinking practical in the learning process. However, in learning academic writing should be done with fun learning but enriching learning experience. It should approach with feeling between the students and the teacher. On the other hand, having discussion with classmates is also needed. It can be shown from the table, 78.8% of students selected ‘Seek help from other classmates, for example checking the writing in English’. Mostly, the students also
seeking help from seniors to convince their work. 33.3% students agreed that they used editors to edit their work. It means that they did not do the written assignment alone. The benefit of using editor in academic writing practices is helping students to check their mistakes. However, being interdependence is also not good.

According to Graham (2006), he assumed that sometimes students are lack of confidence. It is good for teacher to build up their confidence and motivation in order to be a good students. On the other hand, the data shows there were few students who took an additional course. Despite the data shows a small number, there are still many students think it is difficult. As shown at the Table 2, only 7.6% who selected ‘take additional writing course’. It means that most students do the assignment independently.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study is to investigate students’ challenges in academic writing practices and the way students overcome the challenges. The perception were divided into two parts. First, the challenges faced by the participants in academic writing practices. There were 22 aspects in academic writing practices that experienced by the participants. The result of this study shows writing methodology section (81.8%), writing literature review (80.3%), synthetizing information or ideas (77.3%), writing findings or analysis section (69.7%) and writing coherent paragraphs (68.1%) as very difficult compared to writing conclusion (62.1%), revising written work (59.1%), referring to sources correctly (53.1%) and
summarizing (51.2%) as very easy. This study shows that the majority of the participants selected all aspects of academic writing practices as a very difficult/difficult.

Second, the way students overcome the challenges in learning academic writing. When the students confronted by academic challenges in academic writing process, there were 6 aspects that provided in this study. The most solution needed by the students are coming from themselves. The willingness from the students itself is having an important role in learning academic writing practices. The result shows that the majority students tend to be persistent and try to express themselves in different ways to face the challenges in academic writing practices (95.5%). Followed by ‘Discuss with the lecturer to get information on how to approach assignments’ (89.4%). Teacher is taking as an important role based on this study. They should encourage the students to improve their writing skills. This suggest that teacher could help students to develop their critical thinking by directing them into specifics area in writing a research. Allwright (1986) mentioned that teacher and students should make a fun learning environment in academic writing practices. This study showed that only 7.6% participants were taking additional writing course. They prefer to discuss is with the lecturer on how to approach the assignment and seek help from other classmates, like checking the writing result (78.8%).
IMPLICATIONS

The study may be beneficial for lecturers who teach in writing skills, especially in academic setting. The lecturers can help students and guide them. Scaffolding can be another option to help students in learning academic writing. However, the students’ willingness also takes an important role. Equal learning activity between students and teacher are necessary. This study has two limitations. The first limitation is the number of participants. It will be good if the researcher probably add the number of participants to ensure the significant data. The second limitation is the data instrument was only questionnaire. For further research, adding some open-ended questions will make this study more complete. If the time permits, it will be good for the result of this study.

The result of this study was expected to help students in FLA to find out students’ difficulty level in learning academic writing practices. This study have provided us the insight of students’ perception on how they face the challenges in academic writing practices and the way to overcome the challenges. Most of students in this department are facing the same challenges in academic writing practices. The department should consider about having a good learning experience. Students should have successfully prepared in basic writing skills before writing academic papers. The fact that nowadays students in English Department still struggling in academic writing area.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, I want to thank Jesus Christ for His endless blessing. I thank Him for giving me strength, health and willingness in doing my thesis writing. I am also wants to express my gratitude for my beloved parents, Paulus Widarmanto and Variasi Sari for their love, caring, support and encouragement. Because without their support, I could not able to finish my thesis.

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REFERENCES


APPENDIX
KUESIONER


Silakan beri tanda centang (√) pada jawaban yang Anda pilih.

Scale:
1 = Very Difficult  2 = Difficult  3 = Easy  4 = Very Easy
Sangat sulit     Sulit     Mudah     Sangat mudah

Table 1
Challenges in Academic Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges in Academic Writing</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using appropriate academic style</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Menggunakan bahasa akademis yang sesuai)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing methodology section</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Menulis bagian metodologi)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing findings/analysis section</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Menulis bagian hasil penelitian/bagian analisis)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing coherent paragraphs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Menulis paragraf-paragraf yang terhubung satu sama lain dengan baik)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing ideas clearly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Mengungkapkan idea dengan jelas)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing idea logically</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Mengungkapkan ide secara logis)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing ideas in correct English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Mengungkapkan ide dalam Bahasa Inggris yang benar)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesizing information/ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Menggabungkan/menyintesis berbagai informasi/ide dalam satu teks)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing literature review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Mengulas sumber-sumber untuk tinjauan pustaka)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Writing discussion section  
(Menulis bagian pembahasan) |  
Summarizing  
(Meringkas) |  
Paraphrasing  
(Parafrase: menuliskan kembali informasi dari sumber dengan kata-kata lain) |  
Proof-reading written assignments  
(Membaca lagi dengan sangat teliti apa yang sudah ditulis untuk memastikan semua yang ditulis sudah benar dari segi bahasa, gramerika, dan isinya) |  
Planning writing assignments  
(Merencanakan apa yang akan ditulis untuk tugas menulis) |  
Linking sentences smoothly  
(Menghubungkan satu kalimat dengan yang lain secara runtun) |  
Writing abstracts  
(Menulis abstrak atau intisari makalah) |  
Revising written work  
(Menyunting/revisi/memperbaiki tulisan) |  
Writing introductions  
(Menulis pendahuluan) |  
Referring to sources correctly  
(Memasukkan sumber ke dalam tulisan dengan benar) |  
Writing conclusion  
(Menulis kesimpulan) |  
Writing recommendation section  
(Menulis bagian rekomendasi) |  
Writing references/bibliography  
(Menulis referensi/daftar pustaka) |

Table 2  
Overcoming the Challenges in Academic Writing Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overcoming the Challenges in Academic Writing Practices</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Be persistent and try to express yourself in different ways  
( Gigih dan mencoba untuk mengungkapkan diri sendiri dengan berbagai cara) |  |  |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take additional writing course</td>
<td><em>(Mengambil kursus menulis tambahan)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write in my first language and then translate it into English</td>
<td><em>(Menulis dalam Bahasa Indonesia/bahasa ibu kemudian menerjemahkan kedalam Bahasa Inggris)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss with the lecturer to get information on how to approach</td>
<td><em>Assignment</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use editors to edit my work</td>
<td><em>(Menggunakan penyunting untuk menyunting pekerjaan saya)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek help from other classmates, for example checking the writing in</td>
<td><em>English</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data Diri Responden**

- Nama/Inisial : 
- Jenis Kelamin : 
- Angkatan : 
- No. Telp/HP : 
- IPK Terakhir : 

Terimakasih atas partisipasi Anda! 😊