

Writing journal article

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Writing a Journal Article in English: A Brief Note

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People write a journal article to share the results of their studies or practical experiences to a wider community. Some other reasons include: meeting work responsibilities as researchers, building careers as academics, promoting a positive reputation in a community, achieving self actualization and developing scientific knowledge. Overall, authors of journal article inform the readers of his or her view about certain topics. In other words, the purpose of writing a journal article is to express ideas or findings in order to inspire other people to implement or develop the studies further.

The availability of scientific journals in a certain field of study assists authors to reach suitable audience in their areas of study. For example, ANIMA is a journal in the field of psychology, it publishes theoretical and empirical papers in psychology. An author writing for ANIMA would use a psychological point of view in his or her writing to suit this journal's readers as it is assumed that the target audience will have some psychological background. The target audience for psychological journal articles is different from the average magazine or newspaper readers. Magazines and newspapers are more practical and directed to the general audience, whereas psychological journal articles are usually written in to conform to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (sixth edition). This manual provides information about writing structures regarding the abstract, introduction, literature review, methods, results/findings, discussion and implications. Additionally, the manual includes the principles for writing clearly and concisely, as well as the writing formats that should be followed, such as the use of italic fonts for book titles, technical terms and statistical symbols in the body of manuscript, and the arrangement of list of references in an alphabetical order by the authors' last names.

Writing a journal article requires continuous practice that is often considered difficult by some people. Authors' previous experiences in conducting research and writing a scientific paper or thesis (undergraduate or postgraduate thesis) are useful for writing a journal article. Although there are similarities between writing a research report (thesis) and a journal article (in regards to the writing structures and styles), writing a journal article requires the authors to condense their writing format. For example, the literature review in the introduction section is usually brief and directly related to research questions.

One of the main barriers encountered by Indonesian researchers and writers who intend to publish their studies internationally is writing the paper

in English. Writing a journal article in English provides numerous benefits, such as a dissemination of thoughts, ideas, or the results of studies to an international audience. However, if the language used in the English written language is difficult to comprehend, then the authors' purpose of communicating their ideas to a wider audience will not be accomplished and most of all, the article will be rejected or have to be revised. To overcome the limitations in writing, some authors have used translation services to translate their writing from Indonesian to English or have used proofreading services to edit and proofread their writing. However, only the authors who have a sufficient funding can afford these services. Furthermore, the authors who depend on the translation or proofreading services will not be able to improve their English writing skills. In order to produce a well-written piece of work in English, authors should have an adequate English proficiency. Authors should also be familiar with scientific terms used in English, which are often acquired from reading English textbooks or papers. Nonetheless, Indonesian authors still have the opportunity to produce a well-written piece of work providing that they persistently learn from various resources available in the internet (i.e., website of writing tips, dictionary, thesaurus, discussion forum), colleagues' feedback in regards to their writing, and conduct self-directed studies (i.e., rereading and revising their work).

The purpose of writing this particular article is to inform Indonesian authors about the principles of writing a journal article in English. It is based on my experiences as a reviewer in ANIMA psychological journal over the past two years when ANIMA initially started to use English in its publications. Having completed my Postgraduate Diploma, Masters and Doctoral degree in Australia, I have experienced the difficulties in writing a journal article in English and it was through input from my supervisors, colleagues, students, and journal reviewers, I have gained valuable insight into the English written language. Throughout this article, I intend to share my knowledge of writing a scientific paper in English.

Writing a Journal Article in English

The principles of sentence construction in English academic writing are similar to those in Indonesian academic writing. Sentences should be grammatically correct, expressing one main idea, using familiar terms (as opposed to jargons), and containing at least a Subject, a Predicate, and an Object. Within a paragraph, the first sentence is often a topic sentence, in other words, it includes a main idea. The following sentences explain the main idea in detail (i.e., supporting sentences).

Transitional words have been used to connect a sentence to the following sentence. Using transitional words, the message or idea is seen as a uniform. Examples of transitional words in English are *for example, in addition, fur-*

thermore, in contrast, alternatively and in conclusion. Each transitional word should be used in an appropriate context, for instance *furthermore* is used to extend the idea, whereas *in contrast* is used to indicate a counter argument (American Psychological Association, 2010). The following examples demonstrate the use of transitional words: (1) "*Furthermore*, evidence from migrant studies indicated that migrant parents used authoritarian discipline to their children"; (2) "*In contrast* to other studies, the level of parental stress in this study did not reduce following the intervention". Transitional words that are used to represent time sequence are as follows: *then, next, after, while, and since*. Meanwhile, other transitional words are used to represent a cause-effect relationship: *therefore, consequently, and as a result* (American Psychological Association, 2010). The example in a sentence is as follows: "The program can reach a large number of people within a limited time, and *therefore*, reduces the amount of work required to conduct an intervention".

Indonesian authors have often encountered difficulties in choosing words and using the words in an appropriate context. The native language influences word choices used in writing, such as in this sentence: "An interaction between customers and frontline employees may determine whether the customer would use the service *again or never come back anymore*". If the sentence is translated into Indonesian, then the context is clear and the meaning is understandable. However, in English, this sentence is incorrect because the words "*never come back anymore*" convey informal style (i.e., non-academic words). The sentence can be changed into: "An interaction between customers and frontline employees may influence customers' decision to use the service in the future".

In addition to word choice, Indonesian authors have often used incorrect grammar, particularly in the use of *tenses* (verbs denoting the time of an action), *articles* (determiners such as *a, an, and the*), and *singular/plural* (referring to one or more than one thing). The inaccuracies might be related to the influence of native language that does not recognize the rules of tenses, as well as the use of articles and singular/plural forms. The following section will explain in detail the principles used in writing to avoid word-choice and grammatical mistakes.

A Brief Note on Word Choice

The word-choice problems might be related to the vocabulary that a person has. An author who regularly reads English journal articles is more likely to have a large of vocabulary, and therefore, he or she could select English words and terms appropriately. The following paragraphs will explain several principles in choosing appropriate English words.

Writing in English involves logical reasoning. The relationships between words need to convey meaning. Additionally, the use of label should be avoid-

ed (American Psychological Association, 2010). The following example uses inappropriate expressions: "The results found that autistic children, in comparison to normal children, could not pass the false belief tasks". The use of the phrase "*the results found*" is incorrect because it is not possible (illogical) to connect "*the results*" with the word "*found*". A more precise way to express this phrase is: "The results *showed* that ...". If the word "*found*" is still used, then the subject in the sentence should be replaced with the name of author who reported the results of study, for instance: "*Baron-Cohen (1985) found that ...*". Furthermore, the sentence above contains a bias because the term "*autistic children*" indicates that a label ("*autistic*") is more important than the person ("*children*"). Similarly, the term "*normal children*" is considered bias because it implies that there are "*abnormal children*" who might be more inferior than "*normal children*". The term "*abnormal*" connotes a negative label which segregates the different population of children. Thus, the term "*autistic children*" and "*normal children*" should be replaced with "*children with autism*" and "*typically developing children*". The sentence above can be changed into: "The results *showed* that *children with autism*, in comparison to *typically developing children*, could not pass the false belief tasks".

As shown above, scientific writing uses a formal (academic) style and therefore, it is different from informal language. The following example indicates the use of informal style that should be changed into a more formal style: "Since then the number of infected people by HIV has increased at a *rapid speed*". The word "*a rapid speed*" in this case could be replaced with "*dramatically*" and a more correct expression would be: "Since then the number of infected people by HIV has increased *dramatically*". To exemplify further: "This study *looks at* the relationships between emotional intelligence and academic achievement". The term "*looks at*" is considered a colloquial expression. A more appropriate way to express this in a journal article is to use the word "*examines*", such as: "This study *examines* the relationships between emotional intelligence and academic achievement". The following terms are considered informal: *write up*, *get up*, *find out*, *lots of*, *big*, and *like*, and they should be replaced with formal expressions such as: *report*, *rise*, *discover*, *many*, *large*, dan *such as* (American Psychological Association, 2010; Student Learning Centre-Flinders University, 2012a; Uni Learning-University of Wollongong, 2000b).

In general, academic writing tends to be directive, consisting of clear and concise sentences, including relevant points, and containing economically succinct expressions. For instance, "*There were 30 participants involved in this study*". The word "*there were*" in the beginning of sentence has no purpose and therefore, it could be omitted: "Thirty participants were involved in this study". In another example: "Low-income families were considered at risk *due to the fact that* they could not provide high quality home environments for their children". The words "*due to the fact that*" could be simplified

fied into *because*, such as: "Low-income families were considered at risk *because* they could not provide high quality home environments for their children". The following terms can be made simpler: "*for the purpose of*" or "*in order to*" can be replaced with "*to*", "*this present study*" can be changed into "*this study*", "*it appears that*" can be modified into "*apparently*", and "*in reference to*" can be changed into "*about*" (American Psychological Association, 2010, Student Learning Centre-Flinders University, 2012b).

Redundant words that occur in a sentence should be avoided. For example: "The *reason why* parents did not attend the program was *because* they had no concern about their child's behavior". If we use the word *reason* (in Indonesian: "alasan"), then the word *why* or *because* is not necessary because the meaning of the sentence is obvious. The more precise way to express this sentence: "The *reason* parents did not attend the program was that they had no concern about their child's behaviour" or "Parents did not attend the program *because* they had no concern about their child's behavior". The following examples show redundant words that should be avoided (the italicized words are not necessary): *exactly* the same, both *alike*, four *different* groups, *period of time*, summarize *briefly*, and *absolutely* essential (American Psychological Association, 2010).

In academic writing, the word "and so on" or "and so forth" should be omitted because it conveys ambiguity. A sentence incorporating the word "and so on" is considered unfinished (*run-on sentence*; Uni Learning, 2000a). The following sentence exemplifies this run-on sentence: "The efficacy of behavior therapy has been shown in several countries, such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Australia, *and so on*". The use of word "*and so on*" should be removed because it is meaningless. The more formal approach would be to change the sentence to: "The efficacy of behavior therapy has been shown in several countries, such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America, *and* Australia".

A Brief Note on Grammar

Indonesian language does not mark *tenses* (verbs denoting the time of an action, such as the present tense, the past tense, and the future tense), *articles* ("a", "an", and "the") and *singular/plural* forms attached to nouns. Therefore, Indonesian authors have often encountered difficulties with the use of *tenses*, such as: writing sentences in present tense when describing past events. Similarly, with respect to *singular/plural* forms, Indonesian authors often make mistakes in integrating a singular/plural form with the noun that becomes the subject of a sentence leading to the use of incorrect verb. Most of the time, Indonesian authors have also left *articles* from their writing or overused them. The following paragraph provides guidance in using *tenses*,

singular/plural, subject-verb agreement and article, along with examples in the context of scientific writing.

The use of tenses. The introduction section in a journal article consists of a research background, a literature review, aims of study, and hypotheses. It is mostly written in the *present tense*, referring to the present time conveyed by using tenses such as *is/are, s/es* which are attached to a verb. The *present tense* is used to describe facts, current states, as well as general truths, such as: "Indonesia *is* the fourth most populous country in the world". Additionally, the present tense is used to indicate the authors' opinions, conclusions, and interpretations of data or previous findings (The Writing Center-University of North Carolina, 2010), for instance: "This study *addresses* the gaps in the literature as the studies on the effectiveness of mindfulness-based interventions in Indonesia are currently limited". Meanwhile, the *past tense* is used to describe research or studies conducted in the past (literature review). It is commonly denoted with a *d* or an *ed* attached to a verb, as shown in this example: "Efficacy studies by Philips (2001) and Milten (2009) *utilized* parent report and demonstrated moderate intervention effects". It should be noted that if an event or an action in the past continues to the present, then the authors should express this using the *present perfect tense* denoted with the phrase "have/has" and past participle of a verb (American Psychological Association, 2010). For instance, "Research *has shown* that parents play an important role in shaping children's understanding of gender". For the aims of study and hypotheses, both are usually written in the past tense, such as: "This study *aimed* to investigate the efficacy of a mindfulness-based intervention. It *was hypothesized* that participants in the experimental group *would report lower levels of parental stress than* those in the waitlist control group".

The *method* section describes the procedures and methods used by the authors. For a quantitative research, this includes sample size and characteristics of participants, sampling technique, research design, measures, and statistical analyses. The *past tense* is used to describe what the researchers had done in the past (American Psychological Association, 2010). For instance, "Participants *were* recruited from hospitals and community-health clinics in Surabaya. BAS and SF-36 *were used* to measure the burden of care and quality of life". Notably, the *present tense* is used to explain the characteristics of measures in general, as shown in the following example: "The Parenting Scale *consists* of 3 subscales: Laxness, Overreactivity and Verbosity".

The result or finding section reports the results of data analyses that have been conducted by the authors (The Writing Center-University of North Carolina, 2010). Thus, this section should be written in the past tense. For example, "Most participants *showed* a high level of parental self-efficacy. A corre-

lational analysis *indicated* a negative relationship between parental self-efficacy and child behavioral problems”.

The discussion section discusses the results of study and explains the research implications. For this purpose, the *present tense* should be used in the writing, particularly for comparing the result of current study with those of previous study, and explaining the limitations and future implications (American Psychological Association, 2010). The example of the writing is as follows: “The negative relationship found in this study *is* consistent with the findings of the previous studies. A number of limitations that should be considered *are* selection bias, small sample size, and lack of validated measures. Future studies *should* recruit a large sample size with a random sampling technique and include standardized measures”.

Singular and plural forms. In general, if the number of a noun indicates more than one, then the noun should be added with *s/es*, such as: groups, skills, participants, studies, strategies, and countries. However, there are few exceptions, for example: for the word *child*, the plural form is *children*, the plural forms for *man* and *wife* are *men* and *wives*, consecutively (Cambridge University Press, 2015). It should be noted that few words in Latin ending in “a” are basically plurals, such as the word *data* is the plural form of *datum* and *phenomena* is the plural form of *phenomenon* (American Psychological Association, 2010).

Meanwhile, the following words are always considered as singular because they do not have plural forms: *aid*, *research*, *news*, *information*, *advice*, and *evidence* (Student Learning Centre-Flinders University, 2013).

As a part of English grammar rules for a sentence structure, a singular noun should have a singular verb (*is*, *was*, *has*). Similarly, a collective noun should have a plural verb (*are*, *were*, *have*), such as: “*These data* further support the need for a community intervention program in developing countries”. To exemplify further: “Only *one* of the five components of emotional intelligence was significantly related to job performance”. The subject in this sentence is “*one*” and not “*five components of emotional intelligence*”, thus the correct verb is singular. Notably, if the subject in a sentence is singular, then the verb should be singular regardless of intervening phrases following the subject, such as “*together with*”, “*including*”, or “*as well as*” (American Psychological Association, 2010). For instance, “The *number* of correct responses as well as the speed of responses was assessed to indicate reaction times”. A singular verb should be attached to a noun started with these words: “*each*”, “*everyone*”, “*either*”, and “*neither*” (Student Learning Centre-Flinders University, 2013). In contrast, a noun started with one of the following words should take a plural verb: “*few*”, “*many*”, “*several*”, “*both*”, and “*all*” (all referring to a whole; UTS-University of Technology Sydney: Helps, 2015).

The use of articles. A decision to use which article (*a, an, the*) before a noun depends on whether the noun is countable or uncountable, whether the noun is singular or plural, and whether the noun refers to a general or specific entity. The following paragraph explains the rules for using articles based on English learning resources (The Writing Lab-Purdue University, 1995).

If a noun is countable and is in the form of singular, then an article "*a*" or "*an*" is used before the noun. The first letter of the noun determines whether an article "*a*" or "*an*" should be used. If it is a consonant letter, then an article "*a*" will be used, such as in the following example: "This is *a* program for *a* child with special needs". However, if the first letter of the noun is a vowel, then an article "*an*" will be used, such as: "We provided *an* explanation to participants prior to the experiment". If there is an adjective before the noun, then the use of an article "*a*" or "*an*" will follow the first letter of the adjective, such as in this example: "The sample in this study had *a* high level of education".

Additionally, we need to consider the first sound of the noun to determine whether an article "*a*" or "*an*" should be used. Regardless of the first letter of the noun, if the noun begins with a consonant sound, then an article "*a*" should be used, such as in the words: *a* user dan *a* university. Along the line, if the noun begins with a vowel sound, then an article "*an*" should be used, such as in the word: *an* hour. The same rule also applies to an abbreviation, such as *an* SPSS atau *an* RCT.

For a countable noun in a plural form, no article should be used, such as in the following example: "*Participants* were recruited online". Similarly, for an uncountable noun, an article is not necessary, such as in the following example: "*Personality* influences a person's well-being". In this sentence, *personality* is uncountable noun. However, if the word "*personality*" is attached to another countable noun (as a noun modifier), then the use of an article is necessary, such as: *a* personality trait.

An article "*the*" refers to a particular noun (a specific object or person, as well as something that have been indicated previously). For example, "*The* program that *we* have developed was found effective for *parents* from diverse cultural backgrounds. *The* *parents* showed higher levels of confidence after attending *the* program". In the first sentence, "*the* program" refers to a particular program and in the second sentence, "*the* parent" refers to the parent indicated in the previous sentence. However, if the intention is to indicate any program (a general program, not a specific program), then we should use an article "*a*" or "*an*". For example, "A preliminary study was conducted to evaluate the need for a parenting program".

An article "*the*" is also used to indicate the member of a group, such as in these words: one of *the* groups, none of *the* groups, both of *the* groups, all of *the* groups. The example in a sentence is as follows: "One of *the* important

findings of our study is that a mindfulness-based intervention reduces the symptoms of stress".

Conclusion

English is the most widely used language in the world, hence, journal articles written in English should communicate authors' ideas to an international community. The mistakes Indonesian authors usually make when writing in English tend to be related to word choice, grammar such as in the use of *tenses*, *singular/plural forms*, and *articles*. This paper provided a brief guidance in choosing appropriate words and using correct grammar for writing a journal article in English. It should be noted that this guidance is not exhaustive. Readers should have a bank of resources, such as the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* and academic writing *web-sites* listed in the references.

Authors of a journal article are responsible for conveying their ideas. Thus, before submitting an article to a journal editor, it is necessary that authors reread his or her writing, check and revise unclear sentences, remove irrelevant words, replace jargons that potentially impede the readers' understanding with more familiar terms. Spelling and grammar should also be checked. Reading aloud can be used as a strategy to recognize mistakes (American Psychological Association, 2010). The authors could also ask a colleague who is more proficient in English to read their article and provide feedback. If a proofreading service is used, then the authors could learn from the proofreader's input.

Writing in English requires continuous practice. Authors need perseverance and resilience to improve their writing skills with a variety of methods, such as reading, searching, learning from other people's feedback and practicing to use appropriate academic words and terms in English. As a result of this learning process, authors might show more confidence in writing a journal article in English. Notably, with more people having adequate levels of English writing skills, it is expected that the works of Indonesian authors will be widely known at the international level. Thus, I encourage Indonesian authors to continue learning to write a journal article in English in order to widely disseminate their works and influence people around the world.

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Sekilas Catatan Tentang Penulisan Artikel Jurnal dalam Bahasa Inggris

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Seseorang terdorong untuk menulis di jurnal ilmiah karena hendak membagikan hasil penelitian atau pengalaman praktisnya kepada masyarakat luas. Alasan lainnya adalah untuk memenuhi tuntutan pekerjaan sebagai peneliti, menunjang karier dan kepangkatan bagi para dosen, meningkatkan status di masyarakat, sebagai sarana aktualisasi diri dan pengembangan ilmu pengetahuan. Pada prinsipnya, penulis bermaksud menyampaikan informasi kepada pembaca berdasarkan sudut pandangnya mengenai topik tertentu. Dengan kata lain, tujuan menulis artikel adalah untuk menyampaikan ide atau temuannya, sehingga dapat menginspirasi orang lain untuk menerapkan atau menindaklanjutinya.

Keberadaan jurnal ilmiah dalam bidang ilmu tertentu membantu para penulis menjangkau khalayak dalam lingkup keilmuannya. Sebagai contoh, ANIMA adalah jurnal dalam bidang psikologi, ANIMA mempublikasikan artikel berisikan teori dan hasil penelitian dalam bidang psikologi. Dengan demikian, penulis dari jurnal ini menggunakan sudut pandang psikologi dalam menyampaikan gagasan atau temuannya kepada pembaca yang diasumsikan memiliki pengetahuan atau latar belakang dalam disiplin ilmu psikologi. Sasaran pembaca jurnal ilmiah berbeda dengan majalah atau surat kabar. Artikel majalah atau surat kabar bersifat praktis dan dibaca oleh kalangan mana pun, sedangkan artikel jurnal psikologi ditulis berdasarkan panduan penulisan ilmiah, seperti *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (edisi keenam). Panduan ini berisikan informasi mengenai struktur penulisan yang perlu diacu pada abstrak, pendahuluan, kajian teori, metode, hasil penelitian, pembahasan dan saran. Selain itu, panduan ini mengulas prinsip-prinsip menulis secara jelas dan tepat, serta format penulisan yang perlu diikuti, seperti penggunaan huruf miring untuk penulisan judul buku, istilah teknis dan simbol-simbol statistik, serta penulisan pustaka acuan secara urut berdasarkan nama belakang penulis.

Menulis jurnal ilmiah membutuhkan latihan yang bagi sebagian orang tidaklah mudah. Pengalaman melakukan penelitian dan menuliskan hasilnya dalam laporan penelitian atau karya ilmiah (misalnya, skripsi atau tesis) sangat membantu dalam penulisan artikel jurnal. Sekalipun ada banyak kesamaan antara penulisan laporan penelitian dengan penulisan artikel jurnal (misalnya, dalam hal susunan dan gaya penulisan yang ilmiah), artikel jurnal biasanya lebih singkat dan padat. Misalnya, landasan teori yang tercakup pada bagian pendahuluan dari artikel ilmiah biasanya singkat dan berkaitan langsung dengan permasalahan penelitian.

Satu hal yang seringkali menjadi kendala utama bagi peneliti dan penulis Indonesia yang hendak memublikasikan hasil penelitiannya secara internasional adalah penggunaan bahasa Inggris. Menulis artikel ilmiah dalam bahasa Inggris membawa keuntungan, antara lain adalah gagasan atau hasil penelitian akan dibaca (dan kemudian dikutip) oleh lebih banyak orang di luar negaranya sendiri. Namun, apabila bahasa Inggris yang digunakan dalam menulis kurang bisa dipahami maka fungsi komunikasi dari artikel untuk menyampaikan gagasan tidak tercapai dan seringkali artikel dikembalikan oleh editor jurnal dengan status ditolak atau revisi bahasa. Kelemahan menulis dalam bahasa Inggris biasanya disiasati dengan membayar penerjemah yang akan menerjemahkan artikel jurnal berbahasa Indonesia ke dalam bahasa Inggris atau *proofreader* yang bertugas untuk mengoreksi penulisan bahasa Inggris. Hal ini dimungkinkan hanya apabila penulis memiliki dana yang cukup. Selain itu, dengan mengandalkan penerjemah, kemampuan bahasa Inggris yang dimiliki oleh penulis, khususnya dalam menulis, tidaklah bisa berkembang. Memang, agar bisa menulis artikel jurnal dalam bahasa Inggris dengan baik dibutuhkan kemampuan bahasa Inggris yang mencukupi. Penulis perlu pula mengenal istilah-istilah ilmiah dalam bahasa Inggris, yang biasanya diperoleh dari banyak membaca buku-buku atau karya ilmiah yang berbahasa Inggris. Namun, bukannya tidak mungkin melalui proses belajar dari sumber-sumber di Internet terkait dengan tips dan trik menulis, kamus, *thesaurus*, dan forum diskusi, masukan dari rekan sejawat, serta pembelajaran mandiri (membaca ulang dan merevisi), penulis Indonesia dapat menyampaikan gagasan atau hasil temuannya dalam bahasa Inggris secara baik dan benar.

Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk memberikan wawasan bagi para penulis Indonesia mengenai prinsip-prinsip yang perlu diperhatikan dalam menulis artikel jurnal dalam bahasa Inggris. Hal-hal yang saya sampaikan dalam tulisan ini berdasarkan dari pengalaman saya sebagai mitra bestari (*reviewer*) di jurnal psikologi ANIMA selama dua tahun terakhir, khususnya ketika ANIMA mulai beralih menjadi jurnal dalam bahasa Inggris. Berkaca dari pengalaman saya selama studi di Australia untuk jenjang pasca S-1 (Postgraduate Diploma), S2, dan S3, saya pun pernah mengalami kesulitan dalam menulis artikel ilmiah berbahasa Inggris. Berkat masukan dari pembimbing, rekan, dan *reviewer* untuk artikel jurnal saya, saya mendapatkan pembelajaran yang berharga terkait dengan pola dan gaya penulisan dalam bahasa Inggris. Melalui tulisan ini, saya bermaksud untuk membagikan hal-hal yang saya ketahui mengenai penulisan karya ilmiah dalam bahasa Inggris.

Penulisan Artikel dalam Bahasa Inggris

Prinsip penyusunan kalimat dalam artikel ilmiah berbahasa Inggris pada dasarnya sama dengan prinsip penulisan dalam bahasa Indonesia. Kalimat

harus tersusun dengan tata bahasa yang benar, mengandung satu ide utama, menggunakan istilah yang mudah dipahami dan minimal terdiri dari Subjek, Predikat, dan Objek. Dalam sebuah paragraf, kalimat pertama biasanya menjadi inti atau berisikan ide utama. Kalimat selanjutnya berfungsi untuk menjelaskan atau menjabarkan ide utama.

Untuk menghubungkan satu kalimat dengan kalimat lainnya digunakan kata penghubung, dengan tujuan agar gagasan yang disampaikan tampak sebagai satu kesatuan. Dalam bahasa Inggris, ada banyak kata penghubung yang dapat dipakai, seperti *for example*, *in addition*, *furthermore*, *in contrast*, *alternatively* dan *in conclusion*. Kata-kata penghubung ini perlu digunakan dengan tepat sesuai dengan fungsinya. Misalnya, *furthermore* digunakan untuk memperkenalkan gagasan baru. Sedangkan, *in contrast* digunakan untuk menggambarkan gagasan yang berlawanan (American Psychological Association, 2010). Berikut ini adalah contoh penggunaannya: (1) "*Furthermore*, evidence from migrant studies indicated that migrant parents used authoritarian discipline to their children"; (2) "*In contrast* to other studies, the level of parental stress in this study did not reduce following the intervention". Beberapa kata penghubung digunakan untuk menggambarkan urutan atau waktu, seperti *then*, *next*, *after*, *while*, dan *since*. Sementara itu, kata penghubung lainnya dipakai dalam konteks hubungan sebab akibat, seperti: *therefore*, *consequently*, dan *as a result* (American Psychological Association, 2010). Sebagai contoh, "The program can reach a large number of people within a limited time, and *therefore*, reduces the amount of work required to conduct an intervention".

Pada umumnya penulis Indonesia mengalami kesulitan menggunakan ungkapan yang tepat dalam bahasa Inggris. Bahasa ibu memengaruhi penggunaan kata yang dipakai dalam menulis, seperti dalam contoh berikut: "An interaction between customers and frontline employees may determine whether the customer would use the service *again or never come back anymore*". Apabila diterjemahkan dalam bahasa Indonesia, konteks kalimat ini bisa dipahami, namun dalam bahasa Inggris, kalimat ini menjadi kurang tepat, antara lain karena kata-kata "*never come back anymore*" bersifat non ilmiah (informal). Kalimat ini bisa diperbaiki menjadi: "An interaction between customers and frontline employees may influence customers' decision to use the service in the future".

Selain masalah pemilihan kata, penulis Indonesia juga sering keliru dalam penulisan tata bahasa, terutama dalam penggunaan *tenses* (kata kerja yang menunjukkan waktu), *articles* (kata sandang *a*, *an*, dan *the*), dan *singular/plural* (bentuk tunggal/jamak) yang tidak tepat. Tampaknya hal ini dipengaruhi oleh bahasa ibu yang tidak mengenal aturan *tenses*, *articles*, dan *singular/plural*. Berikut ini akan dibahas secara mendetail prinsip-prinsip yang perlu diperhatikan untuk menghindari kesalahan dalam memilih kata dan menyusun kalimat dalam bahasa Inggris.

Sekilas Catatan Tentang Pemilihan Kata

Masalah pemilihan kata terkait dengan perbendaharaan kata dalam bahasa Inggris yang dimiliki oleh seseorang. Penulis yang sering membaca artikel jurnal ilmiah yang berbahasa Inggris cenderung memiliki perbendaharaan kata dalam bahasa Inggris yang relatif banyak, sehingga ia bisa memilih kata dan menulis ungkapan dalam bahasa Inggris dengan lebih tepat. Berikut ini akan dijelaskan beberapa prinsip pemilihan kata dalam bahasa Inggris.

Penulisan dalam bahasa Inggris banyak menggunakan logika. Hubungan antar kata haruslah mengandung arti yang logis. Selain itu, penggunaan kata-kata yang bersifat melabel tidak disarankan (American Psychological Association, 2010). Contoh penggunaan kata yang kurang tepat adalah sebagai berikut: "The results found that autistic children in comparison to normal children could not pass the false belief tasks". Penggunaan istilah "*the results found*" tidak tepat karena "hasil (*the results*)" tidak mungkin (tidak logis) dipasangkan dengan kata kerja "menemukan (*found*)". Ekspresi yang lebih tepat adalah: "The results *showed* that ..." (hasil penelitian menunjukkan....). Apabila kata "*found*" ingin tetap dipakai, maka subjek dalam kalimat tersebut harus diganti menjadi nama pengarang yang melaporkan hasil penelitian tersebut, misalnya: "*Baron-Cohen* (1985) found that ...". Di samping itu, kalimat di atas juga bersifat *bias* (mengandung prasangka) karena istilah "*autistic children*" mengesankan label *autistic* lebih diutamakan daripada individunya. Istilah "*normal children*" juga bersifat *bias* karena mengasumsikan adanya "*abnormal children*" yang mungkin dianggap di luar kewajaran dibandingkan dengan kelompok anak normal. Istilah "*abnormal*" mengandung label negatif yang membedakan kelompok anak yang satu dari kelompok anak yang lain. Oleh karena itu, istilah "*autistic children*" dan "*normal children*" sebaiknya diubah menjadi "*children with autism*" dan "*typically developing children*". Dengan demikian, kalimat di atas diperbaiki menjadi: "The results *showed* that *children with autism* in comparison *typically developing children* could not pass the false belief tasks".

Seperti dalam contoh di atas, penulisan ilmiah bersifat formal (akademis), sehingga berbeda dengan penulisan informal. Berikut ini adalah contoh penggunaan kata atau istilah yang bersifat informal yang perlu diubah menjadi ungkapan yang lebih formal: "Since then the number of infected people by HIV has increased at a *rapid speed*". Kata "*a rapid speed*" dalam konteks ini bisa diganti dengan "*dramatically*", sehingga kalimat berubah menjadi: "Since then the number of infected people by HIV has increased *dramatically*". Contoh lainnya: "This study *looks at* the relationships between emotional intelligence and academic achievement". Istilah "*look at*" bersifat informal karena menggunakan bahasa sehari-hari. Istilah yang lebih tepat dipakai dalam konteks penulisan ilmiah adalah "*examines*", sehingga kalimat menjadi:

"This study *examines* the relationships between emotional intelligence and academic achievement". Beberapa istilah lain yang bersifat informal antara lain: *write up, get up, find out, lots of, big*, dan *like*, dapat diganti dengan istilah formal seperti: *report, rise, discover, many, large*, dan *such as* (American Psychological Association, 2010; Student Learning Centre-Flinders University, 2012a; Uni Learning-University of Wollongong, 2000b).

Pada umumnya, penulisan ilmiah bersifat langsung (*direct*), sehingga penyampaian gagasan dalam kalimat tidak perlu panjang lebar, dan bersifat ekonomis. Misalnya, "*There were 30 participants involved in this study*". Kata "*there were*" di awal kalimat tidak berfungsi apa pun, sehingga bisa dihapus dan kalimat direvisi menjadi "*Thirty participants were involved in this study*". Contoh lainnya: "*Low-income families were considered at risk due to the fact that they could not provide high quality home environments for their children*". Istilah "*due to the fact that*" bisa disingkat saja menjadi *because*, sehingga kalimat menjadi lebih ekonomis: "*Low-income families were considered at risk because they could not provide high quality home environments for their children*". Beberapa istilah yang dapat disingkat antara lain: "*for the purpose of*" atau "*in order to*" menjadi "*to*"; "*this present study*" menjadi "*this study*"; "*it appears that*" menjadi "*apparently*"; dan "*in reference to*" menjadi "*about*" (American Psychological Association, 2010, Student Learning Centre-Flinders University, 2012b).

Penggunaan kata yang bersifat mengulang sebaiknya dihindari. Sebagai contoh: "*The reason why parents did not attend the program was because they had no concern about their child's behavior*". Apabila sudah menggunakan kata "*reason*" (dalam bahasa Indonesia: alasan) maka tidak perlu ada kata "*why*" atau "*because*" karena maknanya sudah jelas. Cara mengungkapkan yang lebih tepat adalah: "*The reason parents did not attend the program was that they had no concern about their child's behaviour*" atau "*Parents did not attend the program because they had no concern about their child's behavior*". Berikut ini beberapa kata yang bersifat mengulang yang perlu dihindari (kata yang tercetak miring berikut ini tidak diperlukan): *exactly the same, both alike, four different groups, period of time, summarize briefly, dan absolutely essential* (American Psychological Association, 2010).

Dalam penulisan ilmiah, kata "dan lain-lain" atau "dan seterusnya" sebaiknya dihapus karena mengandung ketidakjelasan (ambigu). Kalimat dengan kata "dan lain-lain" dianggap sebagai kalimat yang belum tuntas (*run-on sentence*; Uni Learning, 2000a). Contoh kalimat dalam konteks ini: "*The efficacy of behavior therapy has been shown in several countries, such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Australia, and so on*". Penggunaan kata "*and so on*" sebaiknya dihapus karena tidak menambah makna dari kalimat tersebut. Kalimat ini dapat diubah menjadi kalimat yang lebih formal, seperti: "*The efficacy of behavior therapy has been shown in several*

countries, such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and Australia”.

Sekilas Catatan Tentang Tata Bahasa

Bahasa Indonesia tidak mengenal penggunaan *tenses* (kata kerja yang menunjukkan waktu, seperti sekarang, masa lalu dan masa depan), *article* (kata sandang seperti “a”, “an”, dan “the”), dan bentuk tunggal (*singular*)/ jamak (*plural*) yang melekat pada kata benda. Oleh karena itu, sewaktu menulis dalam bahasa Inggris, penulis Indonesia kerap mengalami kesalahan dalam penggunaan *tenses*, seperti: menulis dalam bentuk sekarang (*present tense*) untuk kondisi masa lalu. Sementara itu, dalam penulisan *singular/plural*, penulis Indonesia seringkali salah dalam menentukan bentuk tunggal dan jamak dari kata benda yang menjadi subjek kalimat, sehingga hal ini berimbas pada penulisan kata kerja yang kurang tepat. Penulisan *article* seringkali terlewatkan atau digunakan secara berlebihan. Berikut ini adalah panduan dalam menggunakan *tenses*, *singular/plural*, *subject-verb agreement*, dan *article* beserta contoh-contohnya dalam penulisan artikel ilmiah.

Penggunaan *tenses*. Bagian pendahuluan pada artikel ilmiah berisikan latar belakang penelitian, kajian pustaka, tujuan penelitian dan hipotesis penelitian. Bagian pendahuluan seringkali ditulis dalam bentuk *present tense* yang merujuk pada masa kini seperti *is/are*, *s/es* yang dilekatkan pada kata kerja. *Present tense* dipakai untuk menggambarkan fakta dan kondisi pada saat ini ataupun pandangan umum, seperti: “Indonesia *is* the fourth most populous country in the world”. Selain itu, *present tense* digunakan untuk mengungkapkan pendapat, kesimpulan, dan interpretasi dari penulis terhadap data atau hasil penelitian terdahulu (The Writing Center-University of North Carolina, 2010), seperti: “This study *addresses* the gaps in the literature as the studies on the effectiveness of mindfulness-based interventions in Indonesia are currently limited”. Sementara itu, *past tense* digunakan untuk menggambarkan hasil penelitian orang lain yang dilakukan di waktu lampau (kajian pustaka). Hal ini ditampilkan dalam bentuk penambahan *d/ed* pada kata kerja, seperti contoh berikut: “Efficacy studies by Phillips (2001) and Milten (2009) *utilized* parent report and demonstrated moderate intervention effects”. Namun, apabila peristiwa atau kejadian di masa lampau berlangsung hingga sekarang, maka penulis perlu menggunakan *present perfect tense* yang ditampilkan dalam bentuk “*have/has*” dan kata kerja bentuk ketiga (American Psychological Association, 2010). Misalnya, “Research *has shown* that parents play an important role in shaping children’s understanding of gender”. Sementara itu, tujuan penelitian dan hipotesis penelitian biasanya ditulis dalam bentuk *past tense*, seperti: “This study *aimed* to investigate the efficacy of a mindfulness-based intervention. It *was hypothe-*

sized that participants in the experimental group *would* report lower levels of parental stress than those in the waitlist control group”.

Bagian metode pada artikel ilmiah menggambarkan prosedur penelitian yang telah dilakukan oleh peneliti. Pada penelitian kuantitatif, hal-hal yang dibahas antara lain jumlah dan ciri-ciri partisipan, teknik pengambilan sampel, desain penelitian, alat ukur, dan analisis statistik yang digunakan. *Past tense* digunakan untuk menggambarkan hal-hal yang telah dilakukan oleh peneliti di masa lampau (American Psychological Association, 2010). Sebagai contoh, “Participants *were* recruited from hospitals and community-health clinics in Surabaya. BAS and SF-36 *were used* to measure the burden of care and quality of life”. Sebagai catatan, *present tense* digunakan sewaktu menjelaskan mengenai karakteristik alat ukur secara umum, seperti contoh berikut ini: “The Parenting Scale *consists of* 3 subscales: Laxness, Overreactivity and Verbosity”.

Bagian hasil (*Results*) pada artikel ilmiah bertujuan untuk melaporkan hasil pengolahan data yang telah dilakukan oleh peneliti (The Writing Center-University of North Carolina, 2010), oleh karena itu *past tense* lebih tepat untuk digunakan. Sebagai contoh, “Most participants *showed* a high level of parental self-efficacy. A correlational analysis *indicated* a negative relationship between parental self-efficacy and child behavioral problems”.

Bagian pembahasan (*Discussion*) dari artikel ilmiah berfungsi untuk mendiskusikan hasil penelitian dan menjelaskan implikasi penelitian. *Present tense* digunakan untuk kepentingan ini, khususnya sewaktu membandingkan hasil penelitian dengan penelitian terdahulu, serta menjelaskan mengenai kelemahan dan implikasi dari hasil penelitian (American Psychological Association, 2010). Misalnya, “The negative relationship found in this study *is* consistent with the findings of the previous studies. A number of limitations that should be considered *are* selection bias, small sample size, and lack of validated measures. Future studies *should* recruit a large sample size with a random sampling technique and include standardized measures”.

Bentuk tunggal dan jamak. Secara umum, kata benda (*noun*) yang berjumlah lebih dari satu atau jamak (*plural*) mendapat akhiran *s/es*, seperti: groups, skills, participants, studies, strategies, dan countries. Namun, terdapat beberapa pengecualian, seperti bentuk jamak dari *child* menjadi *children*, *man* menjadi *men*, dan *wife* menjadi *wives* (Cambridge University Press, 2015). Perlu diperhatikan bahwa beberapa kata benda dari bahasa Latin yang berakhiran *a* merupakan bentuk jamak, sebagai contoh: *data* merupakan bentuk jamak dari *datum* dan *phenomena* adalah bentuk jamak dari *phenomenon* (American Psychological Association, 2010). Sementara itu, kata-kata berikut ini tidak memiliki bentuk jamak, sehingga dianggap sebagai bentuk tunggal: *aid*, *research*, *news*, *information*, *advice*, dan *evidence* (Student Learning Centre-Flinders University, 2013).

Dalam penyusunan kalimat menurut aturan tata bahasa dalam bahasa Inggris, kata benda yang berbentuk tunggal harus diikuti dengan kata kerja bentuk tunggal (*is, was, has*), demikian pula dengan kata benda yang berbentuk jamak juga diikuti dengan kata kerja bentuk jamak (*are, were, have*), seperti pada contoh: "*These data further support the need for a community intervention program in developing countries*". Contoh lainnya: "*Only one of the five components of emotional intelligence was significantly related to job performance*". Subjek pada kalimat ini pada dasarnya adalah "*one*" dan bukan "*five components of emotional intelligence*", sehingga kata kerja yang tepat adalah kata kerja bentuk tunggal. Sebagai catatan, apabila kata yang menjadi subjek dalam kalimat berbentuk tunggal, maka kata kerja yang mengikutinya tetap berbentuk tunggal sekalipun terdapat kata "*together with*", "*including*", atau "*as well as*" sesudah subjek (American Psychological Association, 2010). Misalnya, "*The number of correct responses as well as the speed of responses was assessed to indicate reaction times*". Kata kerja tunggal juga digunakan untuk kata benda yang diawali dengan "*each*", "*everyone*", "*either*", dan "*neither*" (Student Learning Centre-Flinders University, 2013). Sedangkan, kata benda yang diawali dengan "*few*", "*many*", "*several*", "*both*", dan "*all*" (yang berarti keseluruhan atau semua) diikuti oleh kata kerja bentuk jamak (UTS-University of Technology Sydney: Helps, 2015).

Penggunaan articles. Penggunaan articles (*a, an, the*) di depan kata benda (*noun*) tergantung pada sifat dari kata benda: bisa dihitung (*countable noun*) atau tidak bisa dihitung (*uncountable noun*), bentuk tunggal (*singular*) atau jamak (*plural*), dan merujuk pada hal yang umum (*general*) atau tertentu (*specific*). Berikut ini penjelasan mengenai penggunaan *article* berdasarkan literatur pembelajaran bahasa Inggris (The Writing Lab-Purdue University, 1995).

Apabila kata benda tergolong dapat dihitung (*countable noun*) dan berbentuk tunggal (*singular*), maka *article* "*a*" atau "*an*" digunakan sebelum kata benda. Penggunaan *article* "*a*" atau "*an*" tergantung pada huruf depan dari kata benda. Apabila huruf depan kata benda adalah huruf mati (konsonan), maka digunakan *article* "*a*", seperti: "*This is a program for a child with special needs*". Apabila huruf depan dari kata benda adalah huruf hidup (vokal), maka digunakan *article* "*an*", seperti: "*We provided an explanation to participants prior to the experiment*". Apabila ada kata sifat (*adjective*) di depan kata benda, maka penggunaan *article* "*a*" atau "*an*" mengikuti huruf depan dari kata sifat tersebut (konsonan atau vokal), seperti: "*The sample in this study had a high level of education*".

Selain memperhatikan huruf depan, pengucapan atau bunyi dari huruf depan dari kata benda perlu diperhatikan. Apabila huruf depannya berbunyi seperti konsonan, meskipun huruf tersebut adalah vokal, maka *article* "*a*" digunakan, seperti: *a user* dan *a university*. Demikian pula apabila pengu-

capan huruf depan dari kata benda menyerupai vokal, maka *article* "an" digunakan, contohnya: *an hour*. Hal ini berlaku pula untuk singkatan, seperti: *an SPSS* atau *an RCT*.

Article tidak digunakan untuk *countable noun* bentuk jamak, misalnya: "*Participants were recruited online*". Hal serupa juga terjadi pada *uncountable noun*, *article* tidak digunakan pada konteks ini, seperti pada contoh berikut: "*Personality influences a person's well-being*". *Personality* dalam konteks kalimat di atas adalah *uncountable noun*. Namun, perlu diingat bahwa apabila kata "*personality*" dilekatkan pada kata benda lain yang bersifat bisa dihitung (*countable noun*), maka penggunaan *article* kembali diperlukan, sebagai contoh: *a personality trait*.

Article "the" merujuk pada hal tertentu (bersifat spesifik atau yang telah disebutkan sebelumnya). Misalnya: "*The program that we have developed was found effective for parents from diverse cultural backgrounds. The parents showed higher levels of confidence after attending the program*". Pada kalimat pertama, "*the program*" merujuk pada suatu *program* tertentu, dan "*the parent*" pada kalimat kedua merujuk pada orangtua (*parent*) yang telah disebutkan pada kalimat sebelumnya. Namun, apabila yang hendak disampaikan adalah *program* apa pun (bersifat umum, tidak merujuk pada hal khusus), maka *article* "the" tidak dipakai, dan *article* "a" atau "an" digunakan. Sebagai contoh: "*A preliminary study was conducted to evaluate the need for a parenting program*".

Article "the" juga digunakan untuk menandakan bagian dari kelompok yang lebih besar seperti: *one of the groups, none of the groups, both of the groups, all of the groups*. Contoh penggunaannya dalam kalimat: "*One of the important findings of our study is that a mindfulness-based intervention reduces the symptoms of stress*".

Simpulan

Bahasa Inggris merupakan bahasa yang paling banyak digunakan di dunia, oleh karena itu artikel yang ditulis dalam bahasa Inggris akan dapat mengomunikasikan gagasan-gagasan penulis kepada masyarakat internasional. Kesalahan yang sering dialami oleh penulis Indonesia sewaktu menukiskan gagasannya dalam bahasa Inggris antara lain dalam pemilihan kata dan penulisan tata bahasa, seperti penggunaan *tenses, singular/plural, dan articles*. Tulisan ini menyajikan panduan singkat mengenai pemilihan kata dan penggunaan tata bahasa untuk penulisan artikel ilmiah dalam bahasa Inggris. Namun, perlu dicatat bahwa panduan ini tidak bersifat komprehensif. Pembaca sebaiknya mengacu pada berbagai sumber pembelajaran seperti *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* dan *website* penulisan ilmiah seperti yang tercantum pada pustaka acuan.

Penulis artikel ilmiah bertanggung jawab terhadap isi tulisan dan cara penyampaian. Oleh karena itu, sebelum dikirim kepada editor jurnal, penulis perlu untuk membaca ulang artikel, memeriksa dan memperbaiki kalimat yang kurang jelas, kata-kata yang tidak relevan, istilah yang tidak umum digunakan yang dapat mengganggu pemahaman pembaca. Selain itu, ejaan (*spelling*) dan tata bahasa (*grammar*) perlu pula ditinjau ulang. Membaca tulisan dengan suara keras merupakan salah satu strategi yang dapat digunakan untuk mengenali kesalahan-kesalahan dalam penulisan (American Psychological Association, 2010). Penulis dapat pula meminta rekan sejawat yang lebih kompeten dalam bahasa Inggris untuk membaca artikel dan memberikan masukan. Apabila artikel diperiksa oleh *proof-reader*, masukan atau koreksi yang diberikan oleh *proofreader* bisa dicermati, sehingga terjadi proses pembelajaran.

Menulis dalam bahasa Inggris memerlukan latihan berulang. Penulis harus menunjukkan ketekunan dan keuletan untuk meningkatkan kemampuannya dalam menulis bahasa Inggris melalui berbagai cara, antara lain dengan membaca, bertanya, mencermati masukan, dan berlatih untuk menggunakan ungkapan dan istilah ilmiah yang tepat dalam bahasa Inggris. Hasil dari proses pembelajaran ini adalah meningkatnya rasa percaya diri dalam menulis artikel ilmiah berbahasa Inggris. Perlu diingat bahwa dengan semakin banyaknya orang Indonesia yang memiliki kemampuan menulis dalam bahasa Inggris yang baik, maka akan semakin banyak pula karya dari penulis Indonesia yang dapat mengharumkan nama bangsa di dunia internasional. Oleh karena itu, saya mengajak para penulis Indonesia untuk terus berlatih menulis dalam bahasa Inggris agar karya-karyanya makin luas dikenal dan berdampak positif bagi banyak orang.

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