Linguistic Features and Generic Structures in Discussion Writing: A Case Study at Politeknik Negeri Media Kreatif

Liza Amalia Putri
Politeknik Negeri Media Kreatif
liza.aputri@polimedia.ac.id

ABSTRACT

What kind of linguistic features and generic structures do the students of Politeknik Negeri Media Kreatif use in their discussion writing? This study aims at analyzing the linguistic features and generic structures found in the students' writing. The SFL Theory of Genre covering linguistic features and generic structures by Gerot and Wigmel is used to analyze the data. The study uses the descriptive qualitative research method and analyzes the writing of the students who have learned how to write discussion essay. The finding is that the dominant linguistic feature of all the texts is the generic human and non-human participants. All students follow the rules of writing: the generic structure, the arguments for, the arguments against and the conclusion or recommendation. The students have put all linguistic features in their discussion writing.

Keywords: linguistic features, generic structures, discussion writing

INTRODUCTION

Learning to write in either a first or second language is one of the most difficult tasks a learner encounters and one that few people can be said to fully master (Richards, 1990). Even at university level, students require further instruction in writing. Writing teachers also face some difficulties. The responsibility of responding and assessing student work is, by far, the most important duty of the university writing lecturers. The value they place on student work will determine not only the course grade for the student, but also is a factor in future scholarships, financial aid packages, and possible admission to graduate school (Putri and Bustos, 2018) Writing classes in universities nowadays are still predominantly language-based writing classes that focus on sentence writing for sentence building tests, rather than focusing on creating compositions to serve the purpose of plurality of real readers outside the classroom context (Hinkel, 2002). This research is a way to analyze students' writing skills and to find the dominant errors that they make while learning this skill by using genre.

According to Hyland (2002), genre is a term for grouping texts together, representing how writers typically use language to respond to reoccurring situations. Luu (2011) states every genre has a number of features which make it different to other genres. Sinar et al (2019) also agree that each genre has a specific purpose, an overall structure, specific linguistic features, and is shared by members of the culture, specific linguistic features, and is shared by members of the culture. Every single text is unique. There are some specific linguistic features (lexico-grammar) of every genre that makes them different each other (Paltridge,

2001). The text that is used in this research is discussion text.

Elashri et al (2013) mentions discussion writing is a text which present (at least) two points of view about an issue. The generic structures of the text are issue that consist of statement and preview; arguments for and against covering point and elaboration; and conclusions or recommendations. It has significant lexico-grammatical features: focusing on generic human and generic non-human participants; using material processes, relational processes, and mental processes; using comparative: contrastive and consequetional conjunctions; using reasoning expressed as verbs and nouns.

This study is focused on the linguistic features and the generic structures of the students' discussion writing. The researcher took the writing of students from various levels and study programs of Politeknik Negeri Media Kreatif who had learned how to write discussion essay.

RESEARCH METHOD

In analyzing the data, the researcher used the descriptive qualitative method by Creswell (2014). The researcher described the linguistic features found in discussion writing of the students. There are the fourth semester students of Publishing study program, the second semester students of Hotel Management study program and the second semester of Animation study program.

In collecting the data, the researcher asked the students to write discussion text as they already learned about discussion text and its language features. The test was performed to measure the students' ability after having some explanation about the text. The researcher considered a test was needed since writing a particular text was an appropriate instrument to measure it based on Miles et al (2014). The students were given some topics to choose.

After the data were selected, the researcher focused on describing the general structures and the linguistic features based on Gerot and Wignell's (1995) theory. Then, the data were transformed into the conceptual framework based on the theory.

RESULTS

The communicative purpose of discussion text is to present different opinions on a particular issue or topic arguments for and against/positive and negative/good and bad. In order to achieve this communicative purpose, all the arguments against and the arguments for should be put in the text (Na, 2007). In this study, all discussion texts are based on the given topics which the purposes are given arguments against and arguments for and closing them with a recommendation. From 50 texts, the students could write discussion texts of which their communicative purposes are to give arguments against and arguments for based on their own point of view.

In identifying the linguistic features of the students' text, the researcher used markers:
Significant Lexico-grammatical Features:
☐ Focus on generic human and generic non-human Participants (in bold)
☐ Use of:
o *Material Processes* e.g. has produced, have developed, to feed (in Italic)

o *Relational Processes* e.g. is, could have, cause, are (in Italic)

o *Mental Processes* e.g. feel (in Italic)

☐ Use of Comparative/contrastive and Consequentional Conjunctions (underlined)

☐ Reasoning expressed as verbs and nouns (abstraction) (in bold and underlined)

Here are four text samples representing the whole essays:

Text of Student 1

Online Shopping *is* **one of the easier way** to get and buy something we want. **Online shopping** *is* a **useful, favorite and easy way** *created* by a **creative person** *to easier* **many people** *to buy* **something they want** by online, if **peoples** *could not buy* by meet **the seller**, so online *is* **the solution**.

Many benefits we *get* from **online shopping**. <u>And</u> **online shopping** really *helps* **a busy person** *to buy* s*omething* if **they** *didn't have* **enough time**. <u>**In Indonesia itself**</u>, there *are* so many **online shoppings**. Like **"blibli.com", "shopee",** and much more. **Many people** *feel* **the things** that they *bought* by **online shopping** *are* same as real. If there *is* a **critics** about **the products**, **people** *can give* **their opinion** to **the seller** by *giving* **a comment** in the **online shopping application**. <u>So</u> **the seller of the product** *will receive* **the comment** from **the buyer** and **some of the seller** *will send* or *give* **the better product** to **the costumer** or **buyer.** "I really *love* **shopping by online.** If **I** *don't have* **many time** *to buy* **it** by myself, **I** *will order* **something that I need** or **I** *want* by **online shopping**. And **the duration of sending product to the costumer** *is not take* **a long time**", said my best friend.

Online shopping also *have* **many disadvantages**. **Many people** *are* *disappointed* with **the products**. <u>Not only</u> about **the product**<u>, but also</u> with **the seller's response** to **the customer** and **the products** *take* **a long time**. **Some of the online shop** *make* **the customer** *disappointed*. **Some of the products** *are* not same with **what the seller sells**, **some of the products** *has* **a bad quality** and **this** *is* **what makes the costumer disappointed**.

"Two months ago, I had something that I really needs to buy quickly. So I decided to order a bag from one of online shop, and the bag for my mother's birthday. The seller told me that the sending of the product will take one week and I am still okay with it. And before I ordered it, I have been thinking and finally choose one pretty bag, the price is worth with the product because in the picture It shows the bag is worth to buy. But when I receive and see the product (bag) I got really disappointed. The bag has a bad quality and it's different with I have ordered. And since that moment, I never buy something from the online shop anymore" said **my classmate**.

By **online shopping**, **the people** *must be careful to buy* or *order* **the products**, <u>because</u> there *is* not only **the disadvantages** but also **the disadvantages**. <u>**Before we order the product**</u>, we *have to see* **the details, the descriptions, the comments from the other customers**; *to get* **the products that we really want**. But it *is* so much better *to buy* **the products** or **the things** by ourself, *meet eye to eye* with **the seller** and see **the products** by ourself. <u>Because</u> **we** *can see* **the real product** before **we** *buy* **it**.

General Statement (Issue):

Online Shopping is one of the easier way to get and buy something we want. Online

shopping is a useful, favorite and easy way created by a creative person to easier many people to buy something they want by online, if peoples could not buy by meet the seller, so online is the solution.

Argument Against:

Many benefits we get from online shopping. And online shopping really helps a busy person to buy something if they didn't have enough time. in Indonesia itself, there are so many online shoppings. Like "blibli.com", "shopee", and much more. Many people feel the things that they bought by online shopping are same as real. If there is a critics about the products, people can give their opinion to the seller by giving a comment in the online shopping application. So the seller of the product will receive the comment from the buyer and some of the seller will send or give the better product to the costumer or buyer. "I really love shopping by online. If I don't have many time to buy it by myself, I will order something that I need or I want by online shopping. And the duration of sending product to the costumer is not take a long time", said my friend.

Argument For:

Online shopping also have many disadvantages. Many people are disappointed with the products. Not only about the product, but also with the seller's response to the customer and the products take a long time. some of the online shop make the customer disappointed. Some of the products are not same with what the seller sells, some of the products has a bad quality and this is what makes the costumer disappointed.

Two months ago, I had something that I really needs to buy quickly. So I decided to order a bag from one of online shop, and the bag for my mother's birthday. The seller told me that the sending of the product will take one week and I am still okay with it. And before I ordered it, I have been thinking and finally choose one pretty bag, the price is worth with the product because in the picture It shows the bag is worth to buy. But when I receive and see the product (bag) I got really disappointed. The bag has a bad quality and it's different with I have ordered. And since that moment, I never buy something from the online shop anymore" said my classmate.

Conclusion or Recommendation:

By online shopping, the people must be careful to buy or order the products, because there is not only the disadvantages but also the disadvantages. Before we order the product, we have to see the details, the descriptions, the comments from the other customers; to get the products that we really want. But it is so much better to buy the products or the things by ourself, meet eye to eye with the seller and see the products by ourself. Because we can see the real product before we buy it.

From the text above, we know that the student includes the general statement, arguments against, arguments for as well as conclusion in their writing and has written the text using the linguistic features based on the theory given:

☐ Focus on **generic human**: **creative person, many people, people, the seller, busy person, they, the buyer, the seller of the product, some of the seller, the customer, buyer, I, my classmate, the pople, we,** and **generic non-human Participants**: **Online shopping, one of the easier way, a useful, favorite and easy way, the**

solution, many benefits, enough time, blibli.com, shopee, the things, critics, the products, their opinion, a comment, online shopping application, the better product, shopping by online, many time, it, something that I need, a long time, many disadvantages, the seller's response, what the seller sells, a bad quality, this, what makes the customer disappointed, the disadvantages, the disadvantages, the details, the descriptions, the comments from the other customers, the products that we really want, the real product.

☐ Use of:

o *Material Processes*: *created, to easier, to buy, could not buy, helps, didn't have, bought, can give, will receive, will send, give, don't have, will order, take, to buy, to order, see, meet.*

o *Relational Processes*: *is, are, want, is not, have, has, must be, have to.*

o *Mental Processes*: *feel, love, are disappointed.*

☐ Use of <u>Comparative/contrastive</u> and <u>Consequentional Conjunctions</u>: <u>and</u>, <u>in Indonesia itself</u>, <u>so</u>, <u>not only…, but also…</u>, <u>because</u>.

☐ Reasoning expressed as verbs and nouns (**abstraction**): **<u>Before we order the product, In Indonesia itself.</u>**

Text of Student 2

In this area**, social media** is a **trending topic**. Many **people** *use* **social media**. Because **social media** *makes* **our live** easier. **We** *can get* **many informations** and **we** *can get* or *add* **our knowledge** from **social media**. **Social media** *has* **advantages** and **disadvantages**, **It** *contains* how **people** *use* **it**. **It** *can be* **advantages** for **us** if **we** *use* that right. And **it** *can be* **disadvantages** if **we** *use* **that** wrong. There are many kind of **social media**, included **facebook,**

instagram, twitter, whatsapp, email, and etc. **they** *have a function*. For **instagram it** *has* **function**, the functions *are* **we** can *get* **many informations** from there **we** *can sell and share* our product if we opened online shop. For **whatsapp** almost **people** in the **world** *used* **this**. **Whatsapp** *has* **functions** too. **The functions** *are* **we** *can* **communication** with **another people** with **video call, chat**, and etc. almost all **social media** *have* **the same function**.

From **the text** above **we** *could know* what the advantaged from **social media**. **I** *would tell* **you** about more **advantages** from **social media**. **Social media** *is* **a place** that **we** *could show* our **talent** and **we** could *improve* our **passion/talent**. So many **people** *used* **social media** *to share* the **video** which it *showed* their **talent** or their **passion**. From the **social media we** *could study* anything in there. For example: for the **women** which *have gotten marry*, **she** *couldn't cook*, **they** *could study* in social media. Because in there, so many recipe, and if you didn't understand you *could watch* **the video** in Youtube. If **you** *were lazy to cook* **you** *could* deserve or *order* **the foo**d via **Gojek**. **It** *was easy* and *made* **us** easier *to do* **something** with **social media.**

<u>But</u> besides the advantages of **social media** there *is* disadvantages from **social media.** The **disadvantages** from **social media** *are* in **social media** there *is* **hoax** and **it** *can be make* **people** *fight* and *type* a **bad words**. <u>Besides</u> that **social media** *make us to be* **a lazy people** and *increase* **the communication** with **our friends** in real life. And the **social media** *make us* to be an **instant people,** **it** *means* **we** *do* almost **all our work** *instant*. So *use* **social media** with the right, because **it** *can make* **you** are *to be* a lucky **people**.

In the text above, it can be seen that the student includes the general statement, arguments against, arguments for as well as conclusion in their writing and has written the text using the linguistic features based on the theory given:

☐ Focus on **generic human: people, we, another people, I, you, women, she, they, us, a lazy people, our friends, instant people,** and **generic non-human Participants: social media, trending topic, our live,   many information,   our   knowledge, advantages, disadvantages, it, that, facebook,   instagram,   twitter, whatsapp, e-mail, the world, this, functions, communication, video, call, chat, the same function, the text, passion/talent, a place, the video, the food, it, something, hoax, the communication, bad words, all our work,**

☐ Use of:

o *Material Processes*: use, makes, can get, can add, contains, can sell, share, would tell, could show, improve, could study, couldn't cook, could watch, can be make, fight, type, make, increase, can make.

o *Relational Processes*: is, has, are, have, were, was, made, to do, means, to be.

o *Mental Processes*: could know, have gotten marry, didn't understand.

☐ Use of <u>Comparative/contrastive</u> and <u>Consequentional   Conjunctions</u>: <u>but</u>, <u>besides</u>

☐ Reasoning expressed as verbs and nouns (**abstraction**): --

Text of Student 3

Social media good to use all **people**. **They** *can* search informations and **knowledge**, in **social media** and also how many **people** to use **social media** good. **Social media** so many also be **knowledge** for children.

I support about **social media** <u>because</u> **I**'m so easily searching **I**nformation, **knowledge** and each other. <u>But</u>, **social media** make me all for*get* it. **I** *have can* to use **social media** good.
Social media *can* be **I**'m for*get* the assignments that, *lazy* and **everything**. It should be **social media** *have* given **we**'re not for*get* it. the proud of event **teenagers** to use such as holyday when a dizzy, and how many **teenagers** to used is not good, like that, from watch, and each other.
I recommend should be **we**'re must to use **social media** is good, so **we** such as to use **social media** good. Teenagers **social media** *do*n't be to use the first, <u>but</u> if want to listen say **parent**s. **Everyone** knows the event **social media** this is *will* made **everyone**'s for*get* myself. So it should be used is good.

From the text, we learn that the student includes the general statement, arguments against, arguments for as well as conclusion in their writing and has written the text using the linguistic features based on the theory given:

☐ Focus on **generic human**: **people, they, we, teenagers, I, parents, everyone.** and **generic non-human Participants**: **social media, knowledge.**

☐ Use of:

o *Material Processes*: *say,*

o *Relational Processes*: *can, have, don't, will,*

o *Mental Processes*: *forget,*

☐ Use of <u>Comparative/contrastive</u> and <u>Consequentional Conjunctions</u>: <u>but</u>

☐ Reasoning expressed as verbs and nouns (**abstraction**): --

Text of Student 4

<u>Nowadays</u> **online shopping** becomes popular in **the society**. **Many people**

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choose **online shopping** rather than going to **the market** as **normal people** *does*. **The development** of **online shopping apps** also *give* **people more option** *to buy* **goods** or even **services**. But, *is* **online shopping** become **the future of shopping**? Is **online shopping** always *have* **advantages** or there *are* some **disadvantages**?

It *is* **the fact** that **technology** *had developed* a lot. **Technology** *had gave* **humans the ease of life**. almost **every people in society** *have* already *aware* and *get used* with this **development**. **The rise** of **online shopping** *gave* **humans the ease of shopping**. **People** *don't need to go* **outside** and deal with **traffic, weather, dust** , and soon jus for buying **something**. **This** means, **people** *don't need to waste* **a lot of time** for *shopping*, furthermore, **online shopping** *give* so much **promos** and **discount** to **the customer**. Also, because **online shopping** use **websites** or **phone apps**, **customer** *can look* and *search* and *pick* for **everything** that **they** *want to buy* without moving from **their chair** or even **their bed**. **It** *is* really *give* **people the easy way** of whopping and *give* **people** more **option** *to choose*.

The rise of **online shopping** may *give* **people the easy way** of shopping. But, **this** also *give* a **bad impact** to the **people**. With **people** *shopping* and *making* **things** in **their houses**, *make* **them** some kind of anti-social. **People** becomes lack of **interaction** with **other people**, because **they** always *spend* **their time** in front of **their phone** and **laptop** and **every electronic** that **they** *have*. **They** *don't spend* **their time** with **other people** like **their friend**s, **their family** and etc, which make them lack of **socialization. This** *is* bad for **human**. **Another reason** why **online shopping**

is bad, *is* because **we** *can't see* **the real things** and **we** *can't* even *touch* **it**. for example, if **we** *want to buy* a pair of shoes, **we** *can't see* the real color of **it** because **phone screen** or **laptop screen** *produce* different **color** and oftenly **it** *mess* the real color of the **product**. Also **we** *can't get to know*, if **the shoes** fit to our foot or not, this *is* also a big **disadvantage** of **online shopping**.

In the text above, it can be seen that the student includes the general statement, arguments against, arguments for as well as conclusion in their writing and has written the text using the linguistic features based on the theory given:

☐ Focus on **generic human**: **many people, normal people, them, other people, they, human,** and **generic non-human Participants**: **online shopping, disadvantages, technology, the society, the market, the development, online shopping apps, option, goods, services, advantages, the fact, the rise, the ease of shopping, traffic, weather, dust, something, a lot of time, this, promos, discount, the customer, websites, phone apps, their chair, their bed, it, the easy way, option, bad impact, their houses, interaction, their phone, laptop, every electronic, their friends, their family, socialization, another reason, product, shoes,**

☐ Use of:

o *Material Processes*: *choose, going to, give, to buy, had developed, had gave, shopping, can look, to choose, making, spend, see, touch, produce.*

o *Relational Processes*: *does, is, have, can't.*

o *Mental Processes*: *aware, get used to, know.*

☐ Use of Comparative/contrastive and Consequential Conjunctions: because, also, furthermore, but.

☐ Reasoning expressed as verbs and nouns (**abstraction**): --

Conclusion

It is learned that the dominant linguistic features of all the texts are the generic human and non-human participants. It is explained by the phenomenon discussed in their texts, which refers to the generic human or non-human participant.

The Generic Structure of Student in Writing Recount Text based on the data is that all students followed the rules of writing of the generic structure, all students followed the rule of writing of the arguments for, all students followed the rule of writing of the arguments against and all students followed the rule of writing of the conclusion or recommendation

In addition, the students have put all the linguistics features in their discussion text based on what they have learned. This is one of the achievements that have been reached by the students of Politeknik Negeri Media Kreatif.

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