

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a brief outline of background of the study, concerning to asymmetric structure parallelism in students' argumentative writing, a query in research question followed by research objective, research delimitation, as well as research significances which present a highly significant in terms of theoretical and practical contribution.

Basic Consideration

Writing is a representation of language in a textual medium through the use of a set of signs or symbols known as writing systems (Hasna, 2009). It also refers to the arrangement of thought and information in a consistent way. Consistency is essential to good writing because it makes the flow from one sentence to another sentence is easy and natural. According to Agustiniingsih (2009), writing is the most difficult skill to be learned among the four skills in learning English; reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Her opinion is supported by James C. Raymond in Agustiniingsih (2009), "An experienced writer will often labor over a single paragraph for more than an hour – not counting the thought and research that went on before the actual writing". Hence, the students have to think hard when they write because they need to express what they feel or what they think into words, words into sentences and sentences into paragraphs, and it is complicated to produce it at the same time.

It is even more complex when the students write in foreign language especially English because they need to find the correct diction and understand the grammar to write an understandable and readable sentence. Furthermore, writing English for foreign learners particularly Indonesian learners is difficult because English is different from Indonesian language in its structure, spelling, and lexical meaning (Sholihah, 2014). For that reason, Indonesian students who learn

English tend to produce mistakes in their writing because they do not master the rules of writing in English very well.

There are four forms of English writing such as narrative, descriptive, expository and argumentative (Balogun, n.d.). Writing in a foreign language, English in particular, often presents the greatest challenge to the students at all stages, specifically writing an argumentative writing because it deals with the complex and controversial issues. Moreover, argumentative writing provides facts, opinions, and evidences that presented by the writers to convince the readers that their position is the best one, agree or disagree position. The primary purpose of argumentative writing is to convince and to persuade the readers that the writers' position or thesis statement on a controversial issue is valid through the writers' analysis of evidence from a variety of sources. At times, one may has a second purpose of her/his argumentative writing; to persuade the readers to take some sort of action (Konar, 2009 p. 133) as cited in Pebrianita (2013). From the explanation, it can be concluded that argumentative writing is a kind of writing which consists some facts and evidences provided by the writers to show their own arguments toward the provided topics and to persuade the readers agree with their statements in the writing as well.

Furthermore, it is important for the writers to understand grammar to help them write clearly since writing is related to grammar. On that reason, the writers have to improve their sentence construction to link grammatical elements within a sentence in a correct and a parallel structure. According to Wooley & Scott (1931, p. 93) as cited in Young (2007), "when two or more sentence elements are in the same grammatical function, it should be made grammatically parallel; if one is an infinitive, the other should be infinitive; if one is a relative clause, the other should be a relative clause; and so on". In conclusion, when two or more sentence elements are

separated by conjunction or linking verb, or the elements are written in series or the elements being compared, the one side and the other side should be in the same level of importance.

Adapted from Writing Center at Chapman University (n.d.), it is stated that parallelism is used for aesthetic purposes as well as to demonstrate the ideas that have the same level of importance and same grammatical form. It will help the writers to break up the use of repetition by laying out different ways of expressing the same thought or idea by using parallelism. Thus, parallelism is necessary when joining words, phrases, and clauses by using coordinating conjunction, correlative conjunction, linking verb, comparison and list or series (Benner, 2004).

It is important in writing because when the students explain something that has more than one element, they should master parallelism to add more information or explanation. The consistency in form also makes it is easier for readers to understand and remember the ideas. Therefore, parallelism should become one of the main concerns in language teaching and learning process especially in writing and grammar. Both lecturers and students have to master structure parallelism in order to understand the use of it and to guide them to have good skill in writing, to have more comprehension about grammar and to have the competence how to produce comprehensible sentence.

The general principle of parallelism is the use of similar ideas expressed by a similar grammatical structure. Though, many students fail to recognize the construction, so there will be no consistency in their writing. As a result, they produce a sentence that is guilty as what is called faulty parallelism as known as asymmetric structure parallelism (Raimes, 1987) cited in Hasna (2010). Moreover, most of the students asymmetrically use parallelism when they try to explain or to convince the readers in their argumentative writing because they do not have

competence about structure parallelism and basic capability in writing. They repeatedly pay no attention to make the sentence parallel and often make asymmetries in parallelism because they believe that it does not change the meaning of the sentence. In contrast, when the sentence structures are not parallel or balance, writing sounds awkward and confusing.

Based on the preliminary study, asymmetric structure parallelisms commonly take place in these types of using:

**The students have to avoid negative activity and society; drugs, join illegal race, fight in school, etc. (Parallel structure with elements in lists or series)*

**They need to take rest after the school activities and preparing their self for the next school day. (Parallel structure with elements joined by coordinating conjunction)*

In the first case, there are three elements in series; plural noun (drugs), verb phrase (join illegal race) and verb phrase (fight in school). The mixture between noun and verb phrases breaks the structure parallelism. The students need to be consistent with the grammatical function in a sentence. Based on the result of preliminary study, it can be claimed that the students argued that the meaning of the sentence does not change even though they asymmetrically use parallelism. A better choice, then, is to use verb phrase in series.

The students have to avoid negative activities and societies; to consume drugs, to join illegal race, to fight in school, etc.

Another option is to use noun phrase in series.

The students have to avoid negative activities and societies; drug consumption, illegal race, school fight, etc.

Then, the second case is the other kind of asymmetric structure parallelism. As Wooley & Scott (1931, p. 93) cited in Young (2007), if one is an infinitive, the other should be infinitive and so on. In this case, there are two elements that joined by coordinating conjunction 'and'. The verbs are in the different form; infinitive (rest) and present participle (preparing). Because the verb preceded by 'to' as infinitive, so the verb form should be in infinitive form. Then, both of those sentence elements should be in infinite form as below.

They have to take rest after the school activities and prepare themselves for the next school day.

Those examples expose that asymmetric structure parallelism is still indicated in argumentative writing. As parallelism is used for aesthetic purposes in writing and to make the sentence understandable, asymmetric structure parallelism should has been analyzed with purpose to decrease the asymmetric structure parallelism and also to lead the students to construct comprehensible sentence when they explain something in their argumentative writing. For that reason, this study analyzed students' argumentative writing; sentences that contain asymmetric structure parallelism entitle "Asymmetric Structure Parallelism in Students' Argumentative Writing".

On that ground, this study must be conducted because it could show the readers who concerned about the types of asymmetric structure parallelism that take place in students' argumentative

writing. What more is, this study focused on analysis of grammar and sentence structure especially structure parallelism point of view and also could be used as brand new information.

Research Question

In its relation to the basic consideration, this study specifically focused on one following research question:

What are the major types of asymmetric structure parallelism take place in English department students' argumentative writing?

Research Objective

Based on research question, this study intended to explore the types of asymmetric structure parallelism that take place in English department students' argumentative writing.

Research Delimitation

In accordance with the tendency towards asymmetric structure parallelism which committed by students in their argumentative writing, this study focused on the types of asymmetric structure parallelism which tend to be produced in students' argumentative writing. It was conducted in English Department, Universitas Negeri Gorontalo. Furthermore, the participants of this study were 5 students of English Department, class of 2013.

Research Significances

A successful study guaranteed a highly significant concerning of theoretical and practical contribution.

In terms of theoretical contribution, this study was expected to be conducive for some aspects. For lecturers on this occasion, particularly grammar and writing lecturers, this study could help

them to know the types of asymmetric structure parallelism that committed by the students in their argumentative writing. It also helped the lecturers to work hard in order to put more attention to teach structure parallelism. This study was also expected to be used as a guideline for lectures and students to reduce the asymmetric structure parallelism. They could understand the appropriate use of structure parallelism by reading this study as a source of references.

On the practical contribution, this study could be utilized as a kind of reference and consideration for lecturers to reduce the asymmetric structure parallelism in students' writing by adding the specific material about structure parallelism in lesson plan for some subjects such as Writing I – IV, English Structure, English Grammar and English Syntax class since parallelism was not being taught specifically in learning process. This study also could improve both lecturers and students knowledge and awareness of structure parallelism and avoid the asymmetry of using it. For the students, this study might urge them to concern more to their writing and to avoid the asymmetric structure parallelism. Furthermore, this study could enhance students' knowledge about structure parallelism and improve their capability in writing. Further researcher also could develop this present study as a source of new perspective for them who were interested in the same point.