

**AN ANALYSIS ON STUDENTS' USE OF ONLINE
RESOURCES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

AN ARTICLE

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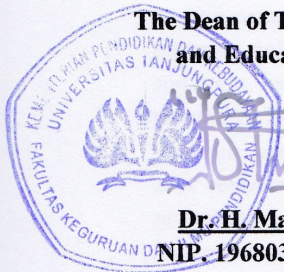
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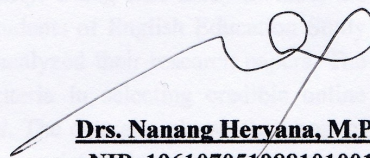
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AN ANALYSIS ON STUDENTS' USE OF ONLINE RESOURCES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana mahasiswa memilih sumber-sumber *online* yang dapat dipercaya dan apakah mahasiswa menggunakan sumber-sumber *online* yang dapat dipercaya dalam makalah penelitian mereka. Penelitian ini juga bertujuan untuk mengejutahui bagaimana mahasiswa menggunakan sumber-sumber *online* dalam penelitian mereka dalam hal menggunakan *paraphrase*, *summary*, dan *direct quotations* secara tepat. Dengan menggunakan metode studi kasus, peneliti mewawancara 4 mahasiswa semester 6 dari Program Studi Bahasa Inggris, tahun akademik 2012/2013, serta menganalisa makalah penelitian mereka. Data menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa memilih sumber-sumber *online* berdasarkan 3 kriteria: *authority*, *currency*, dan *coverage*. Data juga menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar sumber-sumber *online* yang ditulis dalam makalah penelitian mahasiswa masih kurang tepat. Hal ini disebabkan oleh kesulitan yang dihadapi mereka, seperti kesulitan menuliskan sumber-sumber *online* dengan menggunakan kata-kata mereka sendiri, dan kesulitan dalam mempertahankan makna kesamaan dari teks sumber-sumber *online* yang mereka gunakan sebagai referensi.

Kata kunci: Sumber *online*, makalah penelitian

Abstract: The purpose of this research is to find out whether or not the students select credible online resource, and use the credible online resources in their research papers. This research also aimed to find out how the students integrate online resources into research paper, particularly, using *paraphrase*, *summary*, and *direct quotations* appropriately. Using case study method, the researcher interviewed 4 sixth semester students of English Education Study Program, academic year 2012/2013, and analyzed their research papers. The data revealed that students applied 3 criteria in selecting credible online resources: *authority*, *currency*, and *content*. The data also shows that most of the online resources were integrated inappropriately into students' research paper. This occurred because the students encountered some difficulties, for instance, the difficulty of rephrasing online resources by using their own words, and the difficulty in retaining the meaning of the texts of online sources that were used as references.

Keywords: Online Resources, research paper

Writing a research paper requires students to have academic literacy skills. Conducting research in research paper writing requires students to identify, evaluate, and use references to support a point of view. Therefore, students need to read references in addition to what they have already known. Using references means that students need materials or sources which are written by experts in particular fields of knowledge. It is inevitably important to use credible references because in this globalization era, sources are easy to get, especially, on the internet. This means in gaining knowledge through references, students need to search and select appropriate sources to be used in their research paper. In addition, in research paper writing, students are expected to write based on their own ideas with references written by experts by paraphrasing and summarizing the experts' ideas. As students use experts' ideas as references to support their writings, it is important that students acknowledge the references information by citing the sources. Moreover, paraphrasing, summarizing, and citing the sources are needed by students because they need to learn avoiding plagiarism. Thus, in research paper writing, students need to choose credible sources and integrate the sources appropriately.

Internet now has become one of the important tools for academic use. Internet offers students abundance of information online, namely, online resources. Online resources can be explored by students to obtain knowledge which is useful for their research paper. Evidence to this is that recently, there is a development of online libraries or websites which provide free access to academic sources. Metzger, Flanagin, and Zwarun (2003) showed that college students rely very heavily on the Web for both general and academic information, and that they expect this usage to increase over time. The Pew Internet & American Life Project reported that 79% of college students agree that Internet use has had a positive impact on their college academic experience, 73 percent of college students said they used the Internet more than the information searching library, whereas only 9 percent said that they used the library more than the Internet for information searching (Jones, 2002). Thus, there has been a growing interest in which the online resources are being used by students in order to write a good research paper.

As abundance of information is accessible for finding resources along with the reliance of online resources by students, raises the issue of credibility of information found online. Credibility of a source is when a source provides trusted materials to be used for writing. There is a possibility that students select sources that are not credible. Anyone who has internet access can write and post any information easily. Many of online resources do not go through systematic checks and reviews. The publication information is not always easy to identify. It is a challenge for students to select which sources are credible in order to write a good quality of research paper. Students should choose and use credible online resources to avoid using distrusted and false information to support their ideas in research papers.

As these concerns rise, similar studies which explored the Web sourcing in academic writing emerged. Flanagin and Metzger (2000) reported that users rely on web resources, but they are not always diligent in checking the accuracy of the

information they obtain online. This also occurred in the result of a study done by Burton and Chadwick. Burton and Chadwick (2000) revealed that the students found internet source was pleasant because it was accessible and available at any time they needed the source, but the students were not concerned about the publisher reputation of the sources. Adding up to the mentioned studies, one of the studies was a study conducted by Stapleton in which the result was sort of mixed. Stapleton, Helms-Park, and Radia (2006) reported that it was found that although his second-language writers had knowledge that there were differences among paper and web sources in quality, they still used the lower quality sources. Twait (2005) undertook a study on the source selection criteria identified by 13 undergraduate students; it was found that students primarily valued the content of the source. Nevertheless, students were less concerned about the credibility of the sources. Hung (2004) also investigated how undergraduates evaluated five web pages using five evaluation criteria – coverage, accuracy, authority, objectivity, and currency. The study indicated that students usually employ only one or two criteria and use them repeatedly to evaluate all five web sites. They evaluated web sites superficially, even with the criteria spelled out for them. Based on the studies mentioned above, it is obvious that as the online resources continue to grow; the quality of these sources for research paper increasingly becomes a concern. There might be hesitation to cite some online resources in research paper, but it is also difficult to deny the usefulness of the site as a reference. Thus, it is needed for students to apply particular criteria to select online resources for research paper.

Moreover, after students choose credible online resources, students need to integrate online resources into research papers. Integrating online resources means that students combine their own ideas with experts' ideas in order to use the ideas effectively in students' research papers. When integrating the sources, students need to be able to reflect their understanding of what they have obtained from the sources. As students use experts' ideas, it is important that students clearly acknowledge the information of the sources they used in their research papers by citing the sources. In text-citations, students need to provide name of authors, year of publication, and page of where the ideas are taken from. In bibliography, the citation is more complete. The students need to provide name of authors, year of publication, title of sources, retrieving date, and the links of websites. Thus, students need to integrate online resources into their research papers by paraphrasing, summarizing, using direct quotation and citing the sources.

Integrating online resources into research can pose a challenge for students. Internet offers a quick and an easy access to online resources. Since it is easier to find sources on the internet, there is a possibility that students use others' ideas or works without acknowledgement. Moreover, there is some information on the internet that does not have a clear identification of the persons who writes the information. This might increase the possibility that students admit the information as their ideas. Phillips and Horton (2000) announced that in the cyber environment, plagiarism is likely to worsen the academia. A survey conducted by the Center for Academic Integrity (2005) showed that 40% of the American students in more than 60 universities admitted to having copied materials on the

internet. However, Pecorari (2003) reported from his analysis of 17 postgraduate students' writing samples and their own accounts of written assignments, he claimed that students do not plagiarize on purpose. Based on this finding, it can be seen that students by some means do not plagiarize on purpose. Students, as novice writers, may have some confusion over how to integrate and attribute the sources appropriately into their writing in order to avoid plagiarism. When students try to integrate the online resources into their research paper, it is their responsibility to acknowledge the sources by annotating the bibliographic information or adding the citations. Students need to rephrase ideas from the sources and balance between the ideas from the sources and the students' own ideas by paraphrasing, summarizing, and using direct quotations appropriately.

The ability of selecting and integrating online resources is important for students, particularly, to write a research paper. Students of English Education Study Program are required to take research paper subject in the fifth semester. In research paper subject, the students are assigned an assignment in which they are required to write a research paper. Based on the researcher's observation, students used online resources as materials to support the students' ideas in their research papers. The students stated that online resources provide many sources that are easily accessible. The students used these online resources to develop their ideas when they wrote research papers. The students stated that their lecturer also recommended good quality sources that they could find online for their research papers. Nevertheless, the students stated that the lecturer gave little information about the criteria of choosing credible online resources. In addition, the students stated that they tried to balance between their own ideas and the online resources by paraphrasing, summarizing, and using direct quotations. However, the student still encountered some difficulties in integrating online resources into research papers, particularly, in paraphrasing, summarizing, and using direct quotations. Using paraphrases, summaries, and direct quotations is important to demonstrate the students' understanding of their own writing and not merely copy and paste the online resources without any acknowledgment.

Based on the above perspectives and previous studies, the researcher concluded that despite the risk of using online resources for research paper, it is difficult to deny the usefulness of the online resources as a reference. Even more importantly, online resources offer the students to begin confronting the challenges of academic writing: choosing credible online resources, paraphrasing, summarizing, and using direct quotations. Thus, it is important to raise students' awareness about the credibility of information that they may locate on the internet and integrating the sources appropriately. This research aimed to expose the students' ability in choosing credible online resources and the evidence that they used credible online resources. This research also aimed to expose the evidence how the students use paraphrases, summaries, and direct quotations to avoid plagiarism.

The writer conducted this study on the sixth semester students of English Education Study Program, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Tanjungpura University, academic year 2012/2013. Four students were investigated in terms of the students' knowledge about choosing credible online resources for their

research papers. Next, the students were investigated in terms of how much they know about integrating online resources into research papers and how they integrate the online resources into their research papers, particularly, how the students used paraphrases, summaries, and direct quotations.

METHOD

Form of research of this research was case study research. According to Verschuren (2003) in Gerring (2007), case study refers to comprehension examination of a phenomenon. In case study research, the existing phenomenon is observed in order to understand or be familiar with the facts or the situations completely. Yin (2008) explained that case study research is employed when there is a 'how' and 'why' questions. Yin further explained that a researcher has little or no control of the phenomenon being studied in case study research. 'How' and 'why' questions in case study research shows that case study is exploratory which means a researcher seeks to explore behavior and events rather than to prove a hypotheses. To achieve a deep understanding of a behavior or an event in case study research, a researcher tries to investigate participants' self perceptions. Lincoln and Guba (1985) in Shenton (2004) explained that to ensure what participants supplied during the interviews, it is important to use triangulation. Lincoln and Guba further explained that triangulation can be done by obtaining supporting data from documents to explain the attitudes and behavior of the participants under scrutiny. Thus, in addition to interviews, an analysis of the participants' documents is needed. For these reasons, the researcher favored case study as the research method.

The study was conducted at Teacher Training and Education Faculty campus, Tanjungpura University, Pontianak. The participants were four students of English Education Study Program in academic year 2012/2013.

Procedures for data analysis were as follows:

1. Analyzing the interview data through the following steps:
 - a. Transcribing: in this step, the researcher transcribed or wrote down the interview recording verbatim and crossed out the unrelated part.
 - b. Coding: in this step, the researcher coded the lines of the interviewees in the interview.
 - c. Highlighting: in this step, the researcher highlighted the repeated ideas from the interviewees according to the interview questions. In addition, the researcher also highlighted the diversities in order to complete the analysis.
 - d. Emerging themes: in this step, the researcher tried to decide or emerge the theme from the ideas repeated by the students.
2. Analyzing the participants' research papers by the following criteria (Gasper and Shepherd, 2012:18):
 - a. Acceptable: correctly cited; paraphrased or summarized using the student's own words or quoted selectively and correctly.
 - b. Unacceptable: plagiarism of the author's words, which is using a direct quote without acknowledgement.
 - c. Unacceptable: plagiarism of the author's ideas or information, which is presenting such material without acknowledgement.

d. Inappropriate: correctly cited but does not fully demonstrate understanding and engagement with the text; too close to the original. Furthermore, the researcher analyzed whether or not the students use credible online resources based on some criteria proposed by Meola (2004) as shown in table 1.

Table 1: Criteria of Choosing Credible Online Resources

Criteria	Indicators
Authority	Web site may be assessed by noting who authored the site and whether contact information is provided for that person or organization, what the author's credentials, qualifications, and affiliations are, and whether the Web site is recommended by a trusted source.
Accuracy	Web site is free from errors, whether the information can be verified offline, and the reliability of the information on the site.
Objectivity	The purpose of the site and whether the information provided is fact or opinion.
Currency	The information is up-to-date.
Coverage	The comprehensiveness or depth of the information provided on the site.

(Meola, 2004:331-344)

RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this part, the researcher explains about the research findings and discussions. The findings were emerged from the data collected from the interview and the analysis of the students' research papers. In explaining the findings, the researcher does not use the real names of the participants to ensure their confidentiality.

1. Using Credible Online Resources for Research Paper

a. The Students' Knowledge of the Credibility of Online Resources

The four students have their own ideas about quality and credibility of online resources. Superficially, in the four students' perspectives, using online resources is risky. They stated that to them information on the internet is not always credible. They said that the credibility of resources on the internet is not always guaranteed. Generally, the researcher can say the students have understood that they need to be carefully selective in finding and using sources on the internet.

b. The Students' Criteria in Choosing Online Resources

It was revealed that these four students only used two or three surface quality criteria to select credible online resources for research paper. They

applied three criteria in selecting credible online resources: authority, currency, and coverage.

Table 2: Students' Criteria in Choosing Online Resources

Criteria	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D
Authority	√	√	√	√
Accuracy	-	-	-	-
Objectivity	-	-	-	-
Currency	√	√	√	√
Coverage	√	√	√	√

c. Online Resources Used by the Students

The finding shows that the students used credible online resources, for instance, scholarly journals, e-books written by experts in the field, and an interview article with a successful author and college writing professor. Nevertheless, there was still reliance on a risky source, Wikipedia, where anyone can post and edit the information.

2. Integrating Online Resources into Research Paper

a. The Students' Concept of Using Sources for Research Paper

In using outside sources in a research paper, referencing is needed to acknowledge the sources. When this thing was asked to the students, they generally had the same concept in which not only they acknowledged the original sources, but also tried to rephrase the sources by paraphrasing and summarizing them.

b. The Students' Knowledge of Incorporating Ideas into Research Paper

The students stated that they tried to balance between the experts' ideas and their own ideas by rephrasing the experts' ideas with their own words. They have good concept of what paraphrasing, summarizing, and using direct quotations are. In relation to paraphrasing, the word or phrases that were most mentioned by the students were '*restate*' and '*our own words*', and in relation to summarizing were '*main ideas*' and '*shorter*'.

c. The Students' Ability to Integrate Online Resources into Research Paper

Table 3: The Students' Ability to Integrate Online Resources into Research Paper

Criteria	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D
Acceptable	-	-	summarizing expert's ideas and citing the sources correctly	-
Unacceptable	taking the experts' ideas	taking the experts' ideas	-	using direct quotations, but citing the

	verbatim and citing the sources incorrectly	verbatim and citing the sources incorrectly		sources incorrectly
Unacceptable	-	-	-	paraphrasing the expert's ideas, but still using some of the expert's words without putting them between quotation marks, and citing the sources incorrectly
Inappropriate	-	-	paraphrase was still too close with the expert's words	-

Although the students had good knowledge about paraphrasing, summarizing, and using direct quotations, most of them did not do them that well in their research papers. Using criteria proposed by Gasper and Shepherd (2012:18), it was rarely found that the students integrated the original sources 'acceptably'. From all research papers, the researcher found out only three sources that were integrated 'acceptably' in which the sources were correctly cited, paraphrased or summarized using the student's own words or quoted selectively and correctly. Two students took the experts' ideas verbatim without even acknowledging the sources, thus, were categorized as 'unacceptable'. One student tried to cite the author's name and use a lead-in phrase or an active verb to introduce the source, but she did not cite the publication year and page number of the source, thus, was categorized as 'unacceptable'. Then, other cited sources were also 'inappropriate' because the student tried to paraphrase the sources, but she still used the authors' words or phrases without putting the words or phrases between quotation marks.

Finally, when the students were asked about the difficulties that they encountered in paraphrasing, summarizing, and using direct quotations, they came to various responses. They thought it was difficult to explain the sources or the experts' ideas by using their own words. They also concerned that somehow their words changed the content of the ideas a little bit.

DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of this research is to find out whether or not the students select credible online resource, and use the credible online resources in their research papers. Furthermore, this research also aimed to find out how the students integrate online resources into research paper, particularly, using paraphrase, summary, and direct quotations appropriately. Besides exploring the students' concept and knowledge of using sources and incorporating ideas into research papers, the researcher also explored the students' ability to integrate online resources into research papers. To explore the students' ability, the researcher compared experts' ideas that the students cited with the students' entry of the cited ideas themselves by identified the entries as *acceptable*, *unacceptable*, and *inappropriate*.

As shown in the findings, the students said that the credibility of resources on the internet is not always guaranteed. As Hung (2004) stated that students need to be well considered to use online resources because a lot of information found on the internet is not credible. Some sources on the internet are reposted by internet users without any permission. As one of the students stated that information on the internet is sometimes reposted by the users and the quality will decrease. Computer and internet access are what it takes to bring out information to the internet. This is in line with what was stated by Hung (2004) that an internet source does not go through an extensive publication process that includes editing and article review to ensure its quality.

Realizing that there might be a risk that sources on the internet are not credible, the students believe that there is a need to use some criteria in choosing online resources for their research papers. Therefore, these students applied three criteria: authority, currency, and coverage. This was proved by checking the sources that they used in their research papers, for instance, scholarly journals, e-books written by experts in the field, and an interview article with a successful author and college writing professor. Nevertheless, Meola (2004) proposed five criteria of choosing credible online resources: authority, accuracy, objectivity, currency, and coverage. This indicates that the students evaluate the online resources superficially that they applied only three criteria. Moreover, the students sometimes still violated the currency of the sources. Some of their sources were out of date. One of the students still relied on Wikipedia. Wikipedia is web page where anyone can post and edit the information. Some of the information is reviewed, but some are not. Creme and Lea (2008) stated that some information on Wikipedia may well be accurate, but experts do not review the site's entries, there is a considerable risk in relying on this source for writing. Information that is available on Wikipedia is not all edited. Less popular articles on Wikipedia do not get many attentions and end up with some errors. Thus, it is quite a risk to use sources from Wikipedia for research paper.

Another finding shows that the students understand that it is important to rephrase the experts' ideas and acknowledge the sources by using citations. The students also understand and were able to explain the concept of paraphrasing, summarizing, and using direct quotations appropriately. The researcher found two

words or phrases that three of the students mentioned in relation to paraphrasing, 'restate' and 'our own words'. According to them, paraphrasing means to restate the original sources by developing them with their own words. Their concept reflects to what Bazerman (2010) suggested that paraphrasing means to write or say a text, a passage, or others' words using the researcher's own words, or in other words the researcher does not use the same exact words as a text, a passage, or others' words have. They also stated that summarizing means capturing the main ideas of the original sources in a shorter form. Then, in relation to summarizing, the researcher also found two words or phrases, 'main ideas' and 'shorter'. As Bazerman (2010) stated that summarizing means to reproduce another writer's thoughts in shortened form. The students, surely, integrated online resources into their research papers by paraphrasing, summarizing, and using direct quotations. However, based on the research paper analysis, many of their paraphrases, summaries, and direct quotations were still unacceptable or inappropriate.

This study revealed that there was a gap between what the students have understood and what they actually did in their research papers. Firstly, even though the students applied criteria in choosing credible online resources, they themselves still violated one criterion, which was currency. One student still relied on such a risky web page, Wikipedia. This indicated that somehow the students still neglected to the criteria of choosing credible online resources. Secondly, the students clearly stated that they integrated the experts' ideas by paraphrasing, summarizing, using direct quotation, and acknowledging the sources. The students could explain well how to integrate online resources into their research papers. Nevertheless, what they stated was not in line with what they actually did. Based on the criteria proposed by Gasper and Shepherd (2012:18), it was found that the students still made some mistakes in integrating online resources into their research papers. Some sources were categorized as 'unacceptable' means that the students the original sources verbatim without even acknowledging the sources. This 'unacceptable' category also occurred to the student who acknowledged the direct quotations, but she cited them incorrectly. This student tried to cite the author's name and use a lead-in phrase or an active verb to introduce the source, but she did not cite the publication year and page number of the source. The researcher assumed that this occurred because of students' carelessness in writing or because of their superficial understanding. Some sources were categorized as 'inappropriate' because the paraphrase was still too close to the source's text. It is inappropriate to change some words or leave some out, even if the sources are correctly cited. Making minor changes of the sources indicates that the students did not fully demonstrate their understanding of the sources.

The mistakes that were done by the students in integrating online resources into research paper must be avoided because this phenomenon could be misunderstanding. This shows as if the students acknowledge the experts' ideas as their own ideas whereas this might occur because of the students' lack of ability in academic literacy skill or lack of understanding of the materials. As found out in this study, the students admitted that they encountered difficulties. They stated

that it was difficult to rephrase online resources by using their own words, and to convey the meaning of the texts of online sources that were used as references. The difficulties occurred when the students do not fully understand of their writings. Changing the sentence structure and the wording to make the sentence different from its original text can be so difficult. This occurs if the material is complex and the student has not yet fully understood it. It can also be difficult because of the students' level of language skills.

In conclusion, the issues highlighted by this study are the challenge faces by the students in selecting credible online resources and integrating the sources into research paper. The students need familiarity with choosing credible online resources and how to integrate the sources appropriately into their research papers. Skill is needed to work with online resources to write a good research paper. To improve students' literacy skill, particularly, in choosing credible online resources and integrating the sources into research paper, the students need guidance, a demonstration, and training.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion presented in the previous chapter, the researcher concluded that the students believed that online resources are not always credible. They believed that the credibility of online resources is not all guaranteed. This can be seen that the students were superficially selective in choosing online resources for their research papers. They chose the online resources based on three criteria, namely authority, currency, and the coverage. In addition, the students used stable version of online resources, which is the PDF file. The online resources used by the students were scholarly journals from *International Journal of Human and Social Sciences* and *Journals of Applied Linguistics*, e-books from credible authors and an interview article with an expert. Nevertheless, there are many other criteria that the students did not pay attention to, for instance, there was a student who still relied on Wikipedia. This suggests that the students selected credible online resources superficially.

The students understand that it is important to rephrase sources and acknowledging the sources by using citations. The students also understand the concept of paraphrasing, summarizing, and using direct quotations appropriately. The students integrated online resources into their research papers by paraphrasing, summarizing, and using direct quotations. However, based on the research paper analysis, many of their paraphrases, summaries, and direct quotations were still unacceptable or inappropriate. This occurred because they encountered some difficulties, for instance, the difficulty of rephrasing online resources by using their own words, and the difficulty in retaining the meaning of the texts of online sources that were used as references.

In short, the more the students use online resources the more they need skill of academic literacy, especially, in selecting credible online resources and integrating appropriately the sources into their research papers. The students need guidance and practice to improve their academic literacy skill.

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