

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the first part of this paper and consists of background of research, statement of problem, research objective, research significance, and definition of key terms.

### 1.1 Background of Research

English in Indonesia is treated as a foreign language. It means that this language is not commonly used in everyday interaction but formally taught at school starting from elementary to tertiary level. "In the rest of the world, English is a foreign language. That is, it is taught in schools, often widely, but it does not play an essential role in national or social life (Broughton et al, 2003:6). It means that the use of English in some countries is still limited to academic setting only and it is not widely used in social interaction.

In learning English, students are demanded to master the entire aspects of language skills; reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The teacher in the classroom will give materials to build the students' skills. In this case, in higher education such as university especially in English Department, writing skill becomes one of the primary subjects because the final process of their study will be completed by a research which should be reported in English. Absolutely, the writer should write a good and proper writing which follow all the elements in academic writing standardization.

Academic writing itself is a product of many considerations: audience, purpose, organization, style, flow, and presentation (Swales & Feak, 1994: 7). Academic writing in this research reveals one aspects of the previous statement, style in academic writing. Vocabulary shift is a feature of this part. It means that a distinctive feature of academic writing style is choosing the more formal alternatives when selecting a verb, noun, or other parts of speech (Swales & Feak, 1994: 15).

The aspect of vocabulary has become one of the important elements in academic writing. Vocabulary is all the words known and used by a particular person (Cambridge Dictionary, 2008), while word is as a unit in the writing system, the so-called orthographic word. It can be said, for example, that a “word is an uninterrupted string of letters which is preceded by a blank space and followed either by a blank space or a punctuation mark” (Plag, 2002:4). Actually, there are two forms of learning vocabulary: oral and print.

Oral vocabulary is the set of words for which we know the meanings when we speak or read orally. Print vocabulary consists of those words for which the meaning is known when we write or read silently. These are important distinctions because the set of words that beginning readers know are mainly oral representations. As they learn to read, print vocabulary comes to play an increasingly larger role in literacy than does the oral vocabulary. (*Hiebert&Kamil, 2005:3*)

The objective of this research is then to observe vocabulary mastery in print form and the inquiry is also to analyze data in printed text. Learning vocabulary in print form covers many aspects such as word formation, phrase building, part of speech, and many others. Collocation is one of phrase building elements which become the object of this research. Collocation refers

to word partner to combine two or more words. Learning how to use the correct collocations helps writer to write more clearly and precisely. It also makes the writing more effective and idiomatic and more importantly, more understandable for the reader.

Related to this, previous studies have also investigated collocation on different aspects. Some of them focus on translation aspects of collocation (Gorgis & Al-Kharabsheh, 2009; Sularsih, 2010), and some are on the importance of collocation (Aisah, 2009; Durrant, 2008; Philip, 2003). The first relevant study undertaken by Gorgis and Al-Kharabsheh compares the output of two translation tasks. In an attempt to find out the extent to which students of translation can translate Arabic contextualized collocations into English properly, two conflicting views about carrying out a translation task are tested. Then, Sularsih in her mini-thesis conveys translated English collocation and examined whether the result of the translation in Indonesia are directly or indirectly translated. The result of her research shows that of 1000 English collocations 89.20 % use direct translated and the rest 10.80 % use indirect translation. Siti Aisah also presents her observation and describes the English adjective collocations, other word classes that collocate with the English adjective, the most frequent combination of adjective collocations, and to describe the meaning of adjective collocations.

However, although this study also discusses about collocation, but it will take different side that makes it different with the previous ones. The writer will conduct a research about collocation and the specific objective of the inquiry was the students in English Department. It is based on an

assumption that English learner (non-native speaker) have some problems in using collocation. Automatically, as learners, non-native speaker should learn the entire of English materials without exception, including collocation. It leads the writer to conduct a research and to analyze the correctness on students' ability in collocation entitled **“The Students’ Ability in Using English Collocation in Academic Writing”**. The discussion is focused on the ability of students in using collocation in academic writing.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

This research is conducted to find out the students' correctness in using English collocation and the problems in using collocational error in students' writing. Collocation is important to learn in higher academic institution such as university. At the end of their study, students are demanded to do a research and the result is reported in written form. Thus, good quality writing is required. For this purpose, the problems are formulated:

1. How the students use collocation in their essay writing?
2. What are the students' problems in using collocation?

## **1.3 Research Objective**

The aims of this research based on the statement of problem are to find out students' English collocation ability in writing academic text. Thus, based on the research question, the objectives are:

1. To reveal the students' correctness in using English collocation in their writing.

2. To discuss the students' problems in using incorrect collocation.

#### **1.4 Research Significance**

This research is regarded significant to present the importance of learning collocation for students in writing academic text and also contributes to the progress of linguistic study, especially in applied linguistics. The most important thing is that this research attempts to increase students' awareness in using collocation to improve their writing style. This study is also expected to become reference for those who are interested in the same subject.

#### **1.5. Definition of Key Terms**

##### **1.5.1 Collocation**

Collocation is word combination which made up of two or more words and commonly placed together in English. Besides, Collocation is some pairs of words occur together very rarely but other pairs occur together so often that when you see one word, you strongly expect that the other word may be there too (Lewis, 1997:6). Collocation is useful to make word combination natural seems native-like.

##### **1.5.2 Academic Writing Text**

Writing consists of words and these words are put together in particular formations to make sentences. Sentences are then grouped together into

paragraphs (Crème&Lea, 2003:5). Based on the citation, we can conclude that actually everyone could do this activity in every situation and condition. Related to academic situation, academic writing is a product of many considerations: audience, purpose, organization, style, flow, and presentation (Swales & Feak, 1994: 7). It means that academic writing is not a tinkering one. The writer should measure some aspects to create a good quality of writing.

