

## TEACHING INDONESIAN L2 LEARNERS ACADEMIC WRITING: A PROPOSED INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL

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### Abstract

This article reports a proposed instructional model to teach the second language (L2) academic writing in education with citations and references to learners in English Education departments. The model is suggested to be implemented in two semesters in a row. In the first semester of the implementation, learners are to take essay writing and academic reading courses simultaneously. In the former, learners learn to write coherent and cohesive sandwich paragraphs, do peer reviews, and write five-paragraph essays in education without citations and references. In the latter, learners familiarise themselves with various academic sources, write in-text citations and reference lists using Microsoft Word Reference Manager, paraphrase and summarise information from journal articles, and write a short paragraph using citations and references. In the second semester of the implementation of the model, learners take an academic essay writing course which is the progressing combination of the two aforementioned courses in the previous semesters. In this writing course, learners write two 1,200-word essays in education with citations and references from at least five sources. During the implementation of the model, a no-plagiarism policy is upheld through teachers' emphasising on paraphrasing and checking learners' works with plagiarism checkers before submission. Gradual progress is continuously monitored through teachers' feedback on progress. All in all, the model emphasises step-by-step progress in L2 academic writing supported by ample writing preparation time and continuous feedback on progress.

**Keywords:** L2 academic writing, instructional model, peer reviews, academic reading

### INTRODUCTION

Second language (L2) writing is complex (Hyland, 2003) and thus it may pose challenges for L2 learners (Shukri, 2014). This may be attributed to the complexity of writing, including the need to have a good command of grammar, mastery of vocabulary, and good organisation.

Many studies suggested that L2 learners of English struggled in writing (Ahmed, 2010; Stæhr, 2008; Subekti, 2017, 2018b, 2018a). In an Egyptian context, a study by Ahmed (2010) found that Egyptian learners of English had difficulty writing thesis statements, topic sentences as well as sequencing and transitioning ideas. In a Danish L2 context, a quantitative study by Stæhr (2008) involving 88 learners from the lower secondary level found that learners' receptive vocabulary size was strongly correlated with their L2 writing abilities, suggesting that the more vocabulary learners mastered, the higher writing abilities they tended to have. Regarding grammar mastery for writing, several studies in the Indonesian context, furthermore, reported that learners from English departments still needed to improve their mastery of grammar, especially in complex sentences, which were found to be the most frequently written in L2 writing (Subekti, 2017, 2018b, 2018a).

L2 academic writing, a part of L2 writing, furthermore may also be a 'spectre' for learners. In a rather early, yet relevant publication, Steinman (2003) stated that academic L2 writing presents challenges. They must deal with "the obvious linguistic and technical issues such as syntax, vocabulary, and format" (p. 80) and become familiar with academic rhetoric, especially that of native speakers (Steinman, 2003). In line with that, M. Wang (2011) pointed out that there are differences between L2 writing in English and first language (L1) writing and these differences could be challenges for L2 learners. She, for example, mentioned that in Chinese writing, her L1, mentioning a quote from famous scholars does not necessitate citations. In English writing, in comparison, not doing so may lead to an accusation of plagiarism (M. Wang, 2011). Y. Wang (2012) mentioned that L1 and L2 academic writing are different in the level of the lexicon, including word formation and word choices, in sentence levels such as sentence pattern and subject, and the level of passage such as organisation, attitude towards quotations, attitudes towards good writing as well as writing conventions. Simply put, it suggests that L2 learners need to deal with many aspects to be able to write well in L2 and thus well-designed instruction is needed to teach L2 learners academic writing.

Specific about learners studying in English Language Education departments, being prepared as future teachers of English, they normally have specific courses sharpening their skills, including writing (Subekti, 2018a). Through writing classes, as their study advances, the writing classes they take typically progress, for example from paragraph writing, and essay writing, up to academic or research paper writing, preparing them for writing their thesis where learners need to conduct research and write up the reports, connecting the research results and previous studies. Regarding this, in this article, I will share a suggested instructional plan to teach learners in English departments to write academic articles on the topic of education with citations and references.

## **DISCUSSION**

To facilitate learners to write an academic essay with citations and references, preparations begin in the previous semester through an essay writing course and an academic reading course regardless of the class nomenclature.

### **Essay writing course**

This essay writing course should ideally facilitate learners to write essays in several genres, for example, descriptive, expository, and argumentative. This course is to facilitate learners to write coherent and cohesive expository and argumentative essays with relatively good grammar

upon completion. Learners are not required to write using an explicit reference to literature or sources on the internet. However, when they do, they do not need to write any citations and references, but they have to paraphrase their statements to avoid reckless copy-paste issues. At the beginning of the course, a no-plagiarism policy should be introduced, which means that any works which contain copy-paste parts would be heavily penalised, for example, given a zero.

Depending on whether an English language education programme has a paragraph writing course in the preceding semester before learners take this course, three meetings or four should specifically be dedicated to learning to write good paragraphs. Learners are facilitated to understand that a good paragraph should have a main idea and to be able to write such paragraphs. In this case, a sandwich paragraph containing a topic sentence as the first sentence of the paragraph, several sentences providing supporting details, and a conclusion sentence at the end (Savage & Shafiei, 2007; Well, 2013; Whitaker, 1992) could also be an option. This style of a paragraph may provide a straightforward flow of ideas (Whitaker, 1992) and facilitate uniform standards in the writing assessment. This may be the case since writing assessments often give teachers a heavy workload. Thus, having this structure of paragraphs could not only facilitate learners to organise their ideas but also help teachers in assessing learners' works. At this point, learners being able to produce a well-written descriptive and well-written expository paragraph would be an indicator of success.

After learners could write a sandwich paragraph, they are facilitated to write an expository essay consisting of five paragraphs, one introduction paragraph, three body paragraphs, and one conclusion paragraph. They could choose to write an expository essay on the topic of education or other topics. Around six meetings can be allocated for this single task. Learners are introduced to the concept of a thesis statement located in the last sentence of the introduction paragraph (Miller & Pessoa, 2016; Savage & Mayer, 2005). Sentences preceding the thesis statement should state the importance of discussing the topic of the essay stated in the thesis statement to attract readers' attention. The thesis statement introduces the contents of the three body paragraphs that follow. The body paragraphs that follow are in the form of sandwich paragraphs which learners have practised writing in the previous meetings. Hence, when writing the three body paragraphs of their essays, learners are practically repeating what they have learned previously, this time, with increased quantity. Furthermore, learners are facilitated to understand that a conclusion paragraph contains the restatements of the body paragraphs previously mentioned. During the six meetings, learners are expected to make step-by-step progress and the progress is given spoken feedback from the teacher. They are also introduced to peer reviews where their works are given comments by their friends for improvement (Zhu & Carless, 2018). In the second last meeting for this essay, teachers can check all learners' works in a plagiarism checker to ensure that all the works are original and free from copy-paste parts. Learners are let know which parts they should paraphrase before they submit the final works for grading. By this time, learners may have been familiar with a five-paragraph essay structure.

The next task is for learners to write a five-paragraph argumentative essay in education. Six meetings can be dedicated to this task. At this stage, learners practically recycle most of the previous materials, writing sandwich paragraphs, a thesis statement, a prologue at the beginning of the introduction paragraph, and a conclusion paragraph. However, at this stage, they learn how to choose a standpoint on an issue in education whilst at the same time acknowledging that some people may disagree with this standpoint for all the reasons. For example, learners

can argue that online learning gives many advantages. However, they also need to acknowledge that some people may see that online learning has several drawbacks. The goal of their argumentative essay is to convince readers that their standpoint is strong regardless of these opposing arguments. To achieve this, learners can dedicate one of the three body paragraphs to state the opposing arguments and debate these arguments, maintaining the strength of their standpoint. This experience of acknowledging the conflicting ideas could be a preparation for learners when they need to compare various studies when doing literature reviews in their thesis (Snyder, 2019). The same as the previous task on writing an expository essay, learners are given chance to do peer reviews and to have the teacher check their works with a plagiarism checker to maintain the quality and the originality of their works.

There are several key points regarding the sequence of the essay writing course: regular spoken feedback, peer reviews, plagiarism checking, and ample preparation time. First, throughout the course, learners are expected to make step-by-step progress, for example, writing a new paragraph in each meeting. This progress is regularly given spoken feedback. In this case, whilst written feedback may have been more popular in L2 literature (Wen, 2013), spoken feedback offers more practicality to writing teachers (Tree & Clark, 2013), especially when many learners are taking the writing course. Spoken feedback can be timelier than written feedback and may also help avoid delayed feedback, for example in the case of written feedback where teachers need some time to prepare. Hence, learners can revise their work sooner. Secondly, the use of peer review activities enables learners to learn from each other and encourages cooperation (McLucas, 2021). Through reviewing their friends' works, they may also realise mistakes they previously overlook in their works (Subekti, 2022). Furthermore, teachers checking learners' works for plagiarism before they submit the works for grading is very important. That is to send a strong message to learners that plagiarism or cheating is strongly prohibited (Bakhtiyari et al., 2014; Nugraha et al., 2020). However, as several learners may not be familiar with the no-plagiarism policy introduced at the beginning of the course due to no or limited prior exposure to it, teachers check learners' works, for example, the final drafts, in a plagiarism checker before the final submission to ensure that there is no learner committing plagiarism either intended or unintended. Furthermore, throughout the course, learners are 'only' expected to write several isolated paragraphs at the beginning and two five-paragraph essays. This is to facilitate them to spend more energy and resources for drafting and editing their works per the spoken feedback. Hence, the final works could be of good quality (Subekti, 2022). Asking learners to write many pieces of writing during a short period may lessen their chance of evaluating their works as they 'jump' from one writing piece to the next without sufficient editing process, hence the relatively limited number of tasks to complete in this course.

### **Academic reading course**

This academic reading course should ideally expose learners to academic sources they likely use in the thesis writing stage. Among several types of sources likely used, at this stage, learners can be introduced to journal articles, books, and book sections. Depending on learners' level, teachers may introduce several more as well.

In the first four meetings, learners are introduced to the importance of a reference list at the end of academic articles and detailed information on academic sources such as authors, the title of articles or books, journal names, volume, edition, pages, editors' names, and publishers (Saint Mary's College of California Library, 2020). In the ELT world, for example, American Psycho-

logical Association (APA) 7th Edition is the most widely used citation and reference style and as such teachers can focus on this style throughout the semester. Teachers can facilitate them to be familiar with the 'layout' of academic sources and where they can typically find details of academic sources. Learners can also be facilitated to differentiate between journal providers such as Elsevier or Springer and journal names. By the end of the fourth meeting, learners are expected to be able to produce a reference list with complete details using Microsoft Word Reference Manager, which necessitates recording details of academic sources in the correct slots provided (Microsoft, 2022). The use of reference manager applications allowing automatic filling is discouraged to ensure learners can identify details of academic sources correctly.

The next five meetings can be allocated for paraphrasing and summarising information in journal articles or books. Learners are facilitated to differentiate between research articles and theoretical perspective articles and the typical headings in such articles. In these meetings, they are also tasked to summarise information regarding research objectives, methods, and participants they find in a journal article. Through this task, learners practice scanning where learners look for specific information (Yusuf et al., 2017). Learners may use this technique as well when they have to read many academic sources in their later academic writing stage. Thus, this course could facilitate them to be familiar with this technique.

The last seven meetings are allocated not only for sharpening their paraphrasing and summarising skills but also for introducing learners and making them familiar with writing in-text citations and corresponding references, thus facilitating them to understand the danger of plagiarism in the academic world (Bakhtiyari et al., 2014). Learners differentiate between direct sources and indirect sources and how they differ in in-text citation forms. The goal of these seven meetings is for learners to be able to write a short coherent and cohesive sandwich paragraph with in-text citations and corresponding references. This goal is linked to knowledge learners learned from the essay writing course conducted concurrently in the same semester as the academic reading course. In comparison, whilst in the essay writing course learners are expected to write essays without citations, in the academic reading course, they are to write 'only' a short paragraph on the topic of education, only this time, using citations and references from at least two journal articles, emphasising reading for writing purposes. Teachers give several journal articles for learners to select. The ample time allotted makes it possible for individual consultations where teachers can give feedback for learners' improvement and learners who write such paragraphs for the first time can edit their works based on the teachers' feedback minimising their mistakes and learning from them (Zhang & Hyland, 2018).

The key points regarding the sequence of the academic reading course are focused materials and learning intensity. During the semester, learners continuously deal with academic sources. They learn the detailed identity of the sources and how to record them to create good references, their typical parts, or headings, and how to paraphrase as well as summarise some information from these sources. Whilst teachers may be tempted to teach learners several other aspects of academic reading, it is also important to design the instruction in such a way that it is not overwhelming for learners considering that this is their first intensive encounter with such academic texts. Providing consultations where learners can check their understanding and correct their mistakes before they submit certain tasks could help make a more pleasant academic reading experience and alleviate the anxiety that may arise in the process.

### **Academic essay writing course**

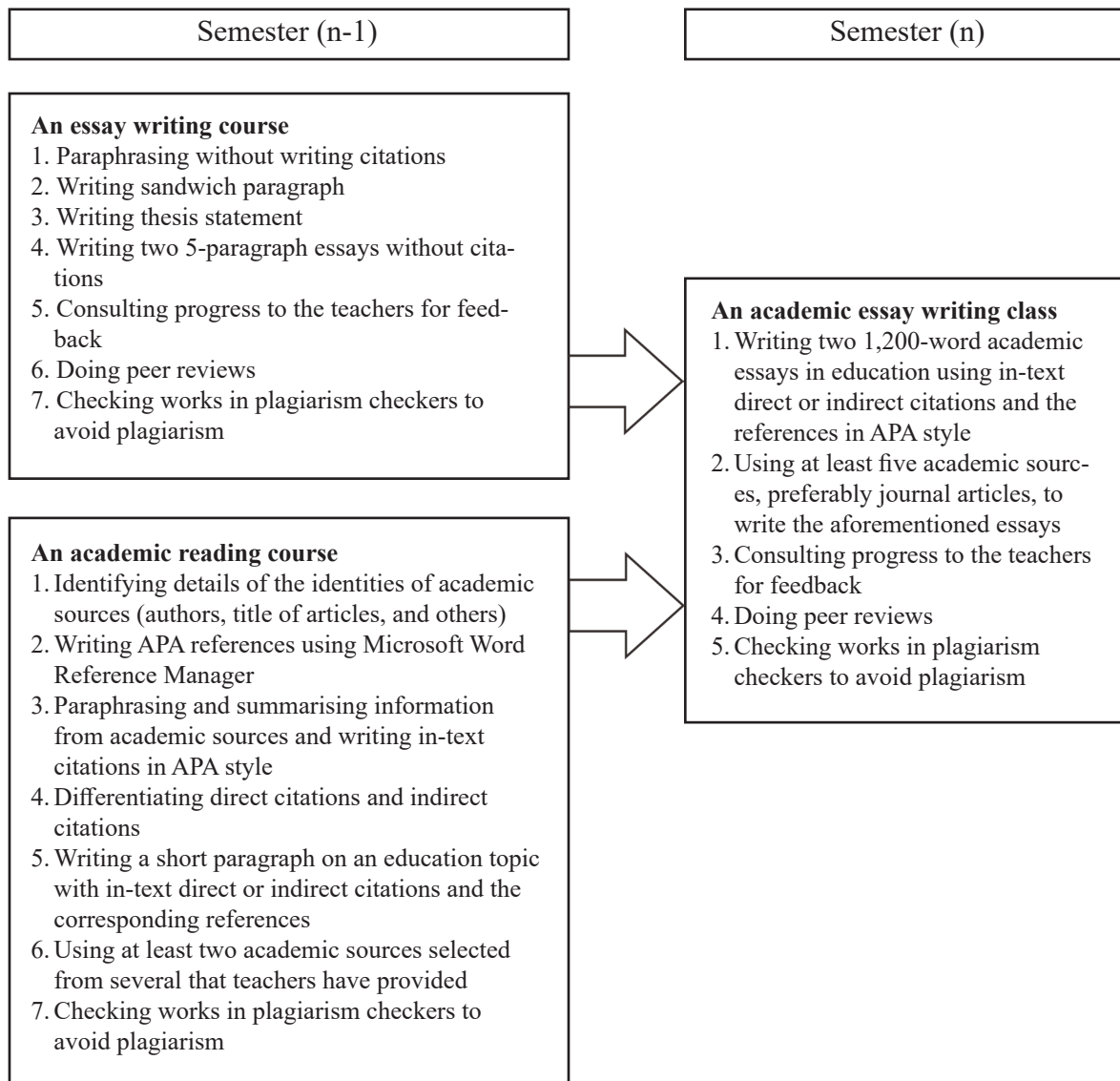
By the time learners take the academic essay writing course, learners have been equipped with knowledge on how to write coherent and cohesive essays without citations in the essay writing course and on putting information from academic sources into a paragraph with citations and references from the academic reading course. In this academic essay writing course, learners will ‘combine’ what they have obtained in the previous two classes through writing essays with citations and references.

In the class, learners are expected to write two 1,200-word essays, each of which should have citations and references from a minimum of five academic sources, preferably journal articles as journal articles provide more up-to-date issues and information in the field (Harzing, 2018). In this course, learners freely decide their topic in the scope of education and freely select their references for that purpose. Of the 16 meetings, the first nine meetings are allocated for writing the first essay, whilst the remaining six are for the second essay. The greater number of meetings allocated for the first article is attributed to the fact that it is learners’ first experience in writing such essays. Likewise, the smaller number of meetings for writing the second essay is due to learners’ growing familiarity with the task, thus needing less time. However, teachers can always be flexible. For example, if learners have completed their first essay faster than scheduled, teachers can start assigning the second essay earlier, for example by increasing the minimum number of words in the second essay. Drawing upon the sequence of essay writing course taken by learners in the previous semester, this academic essay writing course maintain several aspects, for example, peer reviews, individual consultations on progress, and plagiarism checking before final submission.

Perhaps one of the obvious challenges in this class is learners’ differing progress in reading journal articles and writing essays as they are given freedom in the selection of journal articles they use. This may cause a disparity in learners’ achievement. However, teachers can design formative assessments allowing multiple drafting thus assessing learners’ writing progress (Zhang & Hyland, 2018). It could motivate learners to submit their progress more regularly (Zhang & Hyland, 2018). Besides studies reported that Indonesian L2 learners generally have positive attitudes toward formative assessment (e.g.: Kristiyanti et al., 2021).

After taking the aforementioned essay writing course and academic reading course in the same semester, and the academic essay writing course the semester after, at this point, learners have generally been able to express ideas in written form using literature support from various academic sources. In other words, they have also been accustomed to reading academic sources independently for academic writing purposes. From this, learners may progress relatively smoothly to the next writing courses such as proposal writing or thesis writing courses.

The sequence that has been presented in teaching L2 learners academic writing can be summarised in an instructional model seen in Figure 1.



**Figure 1. Proposed Model of Sequence in Teaching L2 Learners Academic Writing**

Figure 1 warrants further comments. As can be seen in Figure 1, in terms of writing, the academic essay writing course is the progression of the essay writing course where learners progress from writing essays without citations and references to writing ones with citations and references. In terms of academic reading, the academic essay writing course is the progression of the academic reading course where learners progress from reading at least two sources for writing a short paragraph to reading at least five sources to write essays. In practice, learners may feel the need to use more than five sources. As can be seen in Appendix 1, an example of essays written by a learner taking the academic essay writing course, nine sources, instead of only five, were used to write the essay, which may suggest that learners are willing to read more academic sources than required to write their essays.

## CONCLUSION

There are several points to highlight regarding the proposed model for teaching L2 academic writing. The model highlights the step-by-step progression in two semesters during which learners' are progressing from writing a paragraph and essays without citations and references

to writing essays with ones. In the process, they also progress from having limited knowledge about citations and the corresponding references to writing essays with ones. Hence, in the process of learning L2 academic writing, they also are getting familiar with reading academic sources extensively and independently. The key idea is to not expect too much too soon in L2 academic writing, hence the ample time allocated for learners to work on each learning objective. During these two semesters, learners may also develop a good academic culture of avoiding plagiarism through teachers' emphasis on paraphrasing and checking learners' work for plagiarism before submission. Teachers' presence in monitoring learners' progress and giving them feedback is paramount as well.

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## APPENDIX 1. An example of learners' academic essays

### The Benefits of Using Movies as a Language Learning Media

#### Abstract

*One of the parts affected by the development of technology is the world of education, especially language learning media. The influence of technological developments makes people who learn a language have many choices of learning media. One of them is movies. Movies are considered one of the effective learning media because movies give some benefits for students, especially to develop students' language skills. These skills can be developed through movies because movies provide real-situation learning. Real-life situation learning can help students achieve the target language more naturally. Moreover, movies also make the learning atmosphere less pressure and stressful. The pleasant learning situation will certainly make the learning process easier. This essay aims to explain the four benefits of using movies as a language learning media.*

**Keywords:** [language, learning, media, movies]

#### INTRODUCTION

In this increasingly advanced world of education, the media for learning is also growing. One of the education areas affected by technological advances is the language learning field. Now, if someone wants to learn a language, they can use the learning media available. One of the learning media that is often used in language learning is movies. Learning by watching movies is considered an innovative way to teach language (Istanto, 2009). It called innovative because learning through movies does not use the traditional method, namely the transfer of knowledge from teacher to student. Besides, Qiu (2017) stated that movies are an effective media for learning because it has a lot of positive impact on students. Learning through movies makes students feel more fun learning than the usual way of learning (Istanto, 2009). So, learning through movies can be considered an effective media because it makes learning fun. Moreover, learning through movies makes the learning process less stressful and pressure for students (Albiladi et al., 2018). It says less stress and pressure because students can learn in their way and they do not have to rely on teachers to explain. Therefore, this essay will focus on the benefits of using movies as a learning media in language learning classes.

#### DISCUSSION

First, movies develop students' vocabulary and grammar. Hu (2006) in Mushtaq and Zehra (2016) stated that movies provide visual and auditory material equally, which helping students to learn grammar and vocabulary. Grammar and vocabulary learning requires a lot of effort and time (Byram & Mogan, 1994 in Istanto, 2009). It may be because of the different grammar rules between their first language and the foreign language they learn. When watching a movie, students will usually listen and observe each scene (including the use of the language). The process of obtaining knowledge through watching movies can occur consciously or subconsciously (Mustaq & Zehra, 2016). By watching a movie, students will remember the material they have learned and compare it with the movie content while enjoying it (Mustaq & Zehra, 2016). Moreover, Mustaq and Zehra (2016) stated that movies make students' learning absorption easier because they can see the relationship between the material they learn and the application in real life. Commonly, students are often confused about the use of vocabulary they have learned in a real-life situation. Through watching movies, students develop their vocabulary while learning about using a vocabulary under the proper context (Istanto, 2009). To sum up, movies help students build their vocabulary and grammar by observing and taking insight from movies.

Second, movies develop students' listening skills. Qiu (2017) stated that watching movies can help students develop listening skills because they contain listening and processing activities. According to Qiu (2017), listening is a skill in a language that requires activeness in doing it. Therefore, Wang and Miao (2003) in Qiu (2017) stated that movies could be used for learning media or developing listening skills. Students will focus on each scene, observe, and trying to understand the content when watching a movie. According to Xi-chun and Meng-jie (2015), movies can develop their listening skills by triggering their excitement. Thus, the learning atmosphere will wake up pleasantly then students will not feel the burden to learn. Furthermore, movies using targeted language make students feel the real-life situation (Xi-chun & Meng-jie, 2015). It will train students to get used to the native language to

facilitate their acquisition of a language. In conclusion, movies help students develop their listening skills by making students active listeners and practicing their listening skills in real-life situations.

Third, movies develop students' speaking skills. Teachers use the movies in the speaking class because speaking is not an easy thing to do and sometimes it makes the class feel the pressure (Irsyad & Narius, 2013). That is why the teacher has to choose learning media that does not burden students or make them unmotivated to learn. One of the learning media that can be used is movies. Movies help students to develop their speaking by sharing their opinion about the content. For example, Irsyad and Narius (2013) provide cartoon movies as the material in their speaking class to not feel the burden when learning. After the students watched the movie, they were asked to share their thoughts about the movie in groups. This group work aims to reduce the students' speaking anxiety (Fitria & Muna, 2019). Fitriah and Muna (2019) stated that speaking anxiety issues students' confidence in speaking. Therefore, to make students active in the speaking class, this anxiety must be minimized. Movies can reduce speaking anxiety in students (Ismaili, 2013). That is because learning through watching movies can make students learn without feeling pressured. Murugan and Razali (2013) stated that movies could build a fun learning atmosphere that will encourage students to express their opinions freely. In addition to reducing anxiety, speaking about movies in groups also trains students to have initiative, creativity, and independence (Irsyad & Narius, 2013). All in all, movies help students develop their speaking skills by reducing their speaking anxiety by building a fun atmosphere.

Fourth, movies develop students' critical thinking. Murugan and Razali (2013) argue that watching movies then questioning after watching can sharpen students' critical thinking. The questions given should refer to questions that can trigger the critical thinking of the student. These questions are questions according to the movie they watch and are arranged in varying forms. For example, questions about their responses about the movie's problem, their opinions about the movie's ending, the moral value they get, and so on. Furthermore, Schirta (2011) in Mustaq and Zehra (2016) suggests learning to use movies that can involve students in the form of collaboration, using their thoughts, creativity, and memorization. These things will trigger students to think more critically about the questions asked. Inviting students to watch a movie and then continued the activity with answering some questions will make students learn in need and use the new vocab to convey their thoughts (Ismaili, 2013). The sentence-making activity is also one of the activities to develop critical thinking. They have to make sentences with the appropriate vocab and grammar to show the results of their thoughts and their creativity communicatively. All in all, movies help students develop their critical thinking by answering the various questions related to the movie they watched to demonstrate their understanding.

## CONCLUSION

The paragraphs above have explained the benefits of using movies as a media for learning a language. The first is that movies help students hone their vocabulary and grammar skills by observing and sampling the application from the movies they watch. The second is that movies help students develop their listening skills. That is because movies make them practice listening in real-life situations. The third is movies help students develop their skills by reducing speaking anxiety by building a fun learning atmosphere. Fourth, movies help students to sharpen their critical thinking through question-and-answer activities after watching a movie. These questions are a list of questions that students have to answer based on their understanding of the movie. These things make movies become one of the language learning media that worth it for the teacher to apply to the classroom.

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