

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher discusses background of the problem, identification of the problem, limitation of the problem, formulation of the problem, research questions, purposes of the research, significance of the research, and definition of key terms.

1.1 The Background of the Problem

Writing is the process of using symbols (letters of the alphabet, punctuation and spaces) to communicate thoughts and ideas in a readable form. According to Caswell & Mahrer (2004: 3) writing is the vehicle for communication and a skill mandated in all aspects of life. In fact, there are three kinds of writing; writing sentence, writing paragraph, writing essay (Oshima and Hogue 1991). Sentence is a collection of words that convey sense or meaning. In fact, writing sentence is important for expressing an idea for daily use. For the same reason, if someone can make a good simple sentence, s/he is able to make a good paragraph and essay constantly.

Simple sentence is a sentence that has one independent clause. It is constructed by putting the correct grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Grammar is a basic component in English, the whole system and structure of a language or languages in general, and usually taken as consisting of syntax and morphology (including inflections) and sometimes also phonology and semantics. Beside that, vocabulary is all about words in a language or a special set of words you are

trying to learn. Furthermore, mechanics in writing means the rules of the written language, such as capitalization, punctuation and spelling.

In English Department at Bung Hatta University writing is one of the subjects that have to be learned. The subjects are divided into three parts; Writing Sentence, Writing Paragraph, and Writing Essay. In Writing Sentence class, students study, especially about writing simple sentences using modals. However, writing simple sentences expressing several functions of modals is one kind of difficulties that students found in Writing Sentence class.

The interview and the observation were done to some second year students of English Department at Bung Hatta university on September, 19th 2018. Based on the interview and the observation, it was found that the students have learnt about expressing several functions of modals in writing sentences. The researcher also found that they got confused about writing the simple sentences with correct components and expressing the modal auxiliaries with appropriate meaning. For example: *Apis should apologizing to rehan, for his mistake*. The correct one is *Apis should apologize to Rehan for his mistake*. In fact, the example above shows that the students did not use a correct grammar, capitalization, and punctuation. The result of interview inspired the researcher to find more about students' difficulties in writing simple affirmative sentences using modals.

1.2 The Identification of the Problem

Definitely, writing sentence is an activity of producing a sentence in written form. Sentences can be classified into affirmative, negative, and interrogative. Essentially an affirmative form is used to express the validity or

truth of a basic assertion, while a negative form expresses its falsity. Examples are the sentences "Jane can be here" and "Jane cannot be here"; the first is affirmative, while the second is negative. The last is interrogative; a sentence that asks a question. Interrogative can be classified into "yes/no question" and "WH question". "yes/no question" is an interrogative sentence that just has two answer options; yes or no, while "WH question" needs an information to answer the question. Interrogative sentences are punctuated with question marks. For example, "Can Jane be here?".

To write simple sentences, the writer should apply correct grammar, and one of grammatical features is auxiliary. Auxiliary is a verb which is used to help another verb in forming a sentence structurally. There are two types of auxiliary; primary auxiliary, and modal auxiliary. Primary auxiliaries are auxiliaries which do not have additional meaning for main verbs or do not add additional meaning to main verbs while modal auxiliaries are auxiliaries which are used to give additional meaning on the main verb.

There are three problems appeared in writing simple sentences using modals. The first problem appears in writing a good simple sentence semantically. The second problem appears in using the punctuation operationally. The third problem appears in choosing modals based on contextual meaning in the sentence. As stated by Refnita (2015), each modal can appear in various sentences, and its meaning depends on the context of the sentence. There are many modals in English; can, could, shall, should, must, ought to, may, might, will, would, and etc. These modals have different meaning and their meaning depends on the

context of the sentence. For example: *I can (could) go to your birthday party*. The modals “can and could” is used to explain the ability.

In addition, Refnita (2015) states that modals can be used in any type of sentences and it has a certain position in each type. The modals have several functions, such as to express ability (can/could), expectation (should/ought to), preference (would like/would rather), need or obligation (must), possibility (may/might), probability (must), to make request (can/could/will/would), to ask for and give permission (can/could/may), and to give advice (should/had better/ought to).

Based on the statement above, it can be concluded that students need to choose and use modal carefully in writing simple sentence or their sentences will not be correct.

1.3 The Limitation of the Problem

The researcher realized that the scope of his research was quite large. In order to produce a good research, he limited the research to an analysis of the second year students’ difficulties in writing simple affirmative sentence using modals. To be more specific, the researcher limited the modal forms to the following: modals that express ability, modals that express possibility, modals that express advice, and modals that express obligation.

The researcher described the second year students’ difficulties at English Department of Bung Hatta University because they have studied about modals in Writing Sentence class.

1.4 The Formulation of the Problem

In line with the limitation of the problem above, the researcher formulates the problem as “What are the difficulties faced by the second year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University in writing simple affirmative sentences using the modals?”

1.5 The Research Questions

Based on the Formulation of the problem, the researcher formulates the research questions as follows;

- 1) Do the second year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University face difficulties in writing simple affirmative sentences using modals that express ability?
- 2) Do the second year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University face difficulties in writing simple affirmative sentences using modals that express possibility?
- 3) Do the second year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University face difficulties in writing simple affirmative sentences using modals that express advice?
- 4) Do the second year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University face difficulties in writing simple affirmative sentences using modals that express obligation?

1.6 The Purposes of the Research

The purpose of the research is to know the students' difficulties in writing simple sentences using modals. The specific purposes are as follows:

- 1) To find out whether the second year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University face difficulties in writing simple affirmative sentences using modals that express ability.
- 2) To find out whether the second year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University face difficulties in writing simple affirmative sentences using modals that express possibility.
- 3) To find out whether the second year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University face difficulties in writing simple affirmative sentences using modals that express advice.
- 4) To find out whether the second year students of English Department at Bung Hatta University face difficulties in writing simple affirmative sentences using modals that express obligation.

1.7 The Significance of the Research

The writer expects that this study gives advantages for the lecturer and the second year students of Bung Hatta University. Accordingly, the lecturer can get some useful information about the second year students' difficulties of Bung Hatta University using modals in writing simple sentences. The lecturer can help the students who have some difficulties using modals in writing simple sentences. For the students, they know their difficulties in writing simple sentences

expressing several kinds of modals. By having known the result, the students will have more motivation to improve their ability to write. Finally, the writer expects that his research will be useful for the next researcher as a reference.

1.8 The Definition of the Key Terms

In order to avoid misconception about this research, here are the key terms mostly used in this research:

- 1) Difficulty is inability to use correct form, semantics, and mechanic operationally in writing simple affirmative sentence.
- 2) Writing is a process to construct the idea in simple sentence using several modals.
- 3) Simple affirmative sentence is a sentence that contains one subject and one verb and used to express the validity or truth of a basic assertion.
- 4) Modal auxiliary is an auxiliary verb characteristically used with other verbs to express mood.
- 5) Modals expressing ability is describe the ability to do something at all times and in all situations.
- 6) Modals expressing possibility is describe the possible situation.
- 7) Modals expressing advice is describe to make a suggestion or advice.
- 8) Modals expressing obligation is describe about the responsibility.