

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

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

1.1 The Background of Problem

Writing is one of the basic skills to communicate. We often write letters or messages to give someone information. Sometimes, writing is difficult to do because we have to express our ideas into a paper and think about the important components which are vocabulary and grammar. It is proved by Hasan & Marzuki (2017) who analyzed Indonesian EFL students' ability in writing by asking the students to do writing task in the form of a letter. Their findings showed that the students had problems in grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, coherence and cohesion, and relevance. Grammatical errors such as error in plural form, articles, verb forms, clauses, passive voice, and preposition are the most frequent mistakes that the students did.

Writing simple sentence is still a difficult thing for the students to do although simple sentence is the lowest level of sentence classification. Based on the study conducted by Mardianti (2015) who analyzed the second year students' difficulties in writing simple sentences in present continuous tense, she found that more than 50% students had difficulties in writing simple sentences in present continuous tense.

It is very important for us to master writing skill. Writing has some major aspects. One of the big aspects of writing is grammar. We will not be able to write if we do not master the grammar. The students should master the grammar and know the procedures in writing sentences in order to produce good sentences. In other case, grammar is also important to make a good sentence because it has some formulas that should be applied correctly in writing.

Grammar takes an important role in a good writing. It determines whether the writing is understandable or not. According to Coghill & Magedanz (2003: xvi) “The grammar of a language is the set of rules that govern its structure. Grammar determines how words are arranged to form meaningful units.” Grammar is important in sentence structure and has many aspects. According to Torres-Gouzerh (2019: 1), “ The basic rule is that all sentences must have a **subject (S)**, which can be a **pronoun**, a **noun**, or a **noun phrase**, and a **verb (V)**, which also can be a **verb phrase**. In many cases, the verb can be followed by a direct **object (O)**.

Another aspect that may come in sentence structure is expressions of quantity. This expression tells us how many or how much of something is available. The expression which is used will depend on whether the noun is countable or noncountable. Azar (2002: 119) says that some expressions of quantity can be used only with countable nouns. Some others can be used only with noncountable nouns, and some others can be used with countable and noncountable nouns.

Based on the study conducted by Irfa'i (2020), he found that some students did error in using expressions of quantity because they had such lack knowledge about the kinds of expressions of quantity. He also said that some students did not understand the function and how to use the expressions of quantity such as the use of countable and noncountable noun of expressions of quantity.

From the description above, the researcher tried to analyze the difficulties to use expressions of quantity in writing simple sentences. The researcher was interested in conducting a research under the title: An Analysis of the Third Year Students' Difficulties to Use Expressions of Quantity in Writing Positive Simple Sentences at the English Department of Bung Hatta University.

1.2 The Identification of Problem

English has four major skills. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is a skill that almost all people do to communicate. But some students are still difficult to write sentences because they are afraid of making mistakes in writing such as grammatical error or misspelling and other factors. It is proved by Ariyanti & Fitriana (2017) who conducted a study about *EFL students' difficulties and needs in essay writing*. They found that Indonesian ELF university students often made mistakes in tenses, subject-verb arrangement, personal pronoun, word order, article, auxiliary, and sentence fragment in writing essay.

According to Refnita (2016: 3) sentences are grouped due to the use or the complexities. In relating to the use, the sentences can be grouped as statement,

interrogative, exclamation or imperative. A statement brings someone to an information, for example: *West Sumatera is one of the provinces in Indonesia*. An interrogative means asking for information or opinion, for example: *May I borrow your book?*. Exclamation means showing emotions, fun, surprise, disappointment, or others, for example: *What a beautiful day*. Imperative means asking everyone to do something, for example: *Be careful on the way*.

In relation to the complexities, sentences are divided into several types. Andersen (2014: 2) states that sentences are classified into some types; namely simple sentence, compound sentence, complex sentence, and compound-complex sentence. Andersen (2014: 2) explains that a simple sentence consists of a main clause. According to Andersen (2014: 2) a compound sentence consists of two main clause. Delahunty and Garvey in Fadhilah (2017: 14) state that “complex sentence contains two or more clauses, but at least one of them is subordinate to another in the sense that it plays a grammatical roles such as subject, object, or modifier in the large sentence.” According to Andersen (2014: 2) “a compound-complex sentence combines complex sentence and compound sentence forms.”

The common problems that students face in writing simple sentence are the word arrangement, sentence structure and writing mechanic. Sometimes students do not pay attention to grammar. For instance, the students found difficulties in writing simple sentences using expressions of quantity.

In general, the expressions of quantity are divided into two classes. The expressions of quantity can used with count nouns and with non count nouns. But some of them can be used with both count and noncount nouns.

1.3 The Limitation of Problem

This research is limited in using some expressions of quantity in writing simple sentences especially in the form of positive simple sentences. The expressions of quantity which will be used in this research are to modify countable noun. They are *both*, *a couple of*, *several*, and *a number of*. This research is implemented to the third year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University in the academic 2020/2021.

1.4 The Formulation of Problem

Do the students' have difficulties in using expressions of quantity to write positive simple sentences at the English Department of Bung Hatta University?

1.5 Research Questions

- 1 Do the third year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University have difficulties in writing positive simple sentences having *both*?
- 2 Do the third year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University have difficulties in writing positive simple sentences having *a couple of*?
- 3 Do the third year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University have difficulties in writing positive simple sentences having *several*?
- 4 Do the third year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University have difficulties in writing positive simple sentences having *a number of*?

1.6 The Purpose of study

The aim of this research is to describe the third year students' difficulties to use expressions of quantity in writing simple sentences. Specially, the purposes of this research are:

1. To find out whether the third year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University had difficulties in writing positive simple sentences having *both*.
2. To find out whether the third year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University had difficulties in writing positive simple sentences having *a couple of*.
3. To find out whether the third year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University had difficulties in writing positive simple sentences having *several*.
4. To find out whether the third year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University had difficulties in writing positive simple sentences having *a number of*.

1.7 The Significance of Research

The results of this research are expected to give contribution to the lecturers, the students, and the researcher. For the lecturers, it could give scientific information about the students' difficulties in writing simple sentences using expression of quantity so that the lecturers can find strategies to teach expression of quantity. For the students, they will know their difficulties to use expression of quantity in writing simple sentences so it can increase their motivation in studying grammar and writing. And for the researcher, it can increase his knowledge about conducting a research.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding about the key terms used in this research, the researcher defines them as follows:

1. Writing is a skill of expressing ideas into a paper in English to write simple sentences using expression of quantity.
2. Sentence is a group of words which consist of subject, predicate and has a complete meaning.
3. Simple sentence is an independent clause which has subject and predicate.
4. An expression of quantity is word or phrase to express quantity.
5. Countable noun is a noun that can be counted.
6. Noncountable noun is a noun which can not be counted or is not usually counted.