**CHAPTER I**

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the background of the problem, the identification of the problem, the limitation of the problem, the formulation of the research, the purposes of the research, the significance of the research, and the definitions of key terms. The explanation of each part can be seen as follows.

**1.1 The Background of the Problem**

English is one of the international languages ​​used in various countries that can be used in studying various fields because of its very significant role in the world of communication. Generally, there are four language skills in English. There are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing skill, for example, is indispensable for human life. Writing needs many aspects to say it well prepared because it denotes how far the students learn about writing.

Unfortunately, the writing skills of students in Indonesia are still quite low, especially in writing a paragraph. It's because the students are trapped in choosing the topic or idea to be explained (content and organization), limited vocabulary, and difficulties in using correct grammar and mechanics appropriately. It’s also supported by most students who feel difficult and bored in writing sessions. The students need to develop the topic sentence to make a complete paragraph based on its generic structure. It’s also difficult for them to figure out, generate, and express ideas.

One result from previous journals that the researcher found of students’ problem in writing paragraphs is supported by the journal written by Sukarta Kartawijaya (2018) with the title "Improving Students' Writing Skills in Writing Paragraphs through an Outline Technique". The problem that he encountered in the journal was the students feel that writing paragraph is difficult because they have no ideas, students’ knowledge about writing is low because they have a lack of writing models, and they do not have any clues to write. So that, they are difficult to organize ideas. It made the students feel bored, and they are not interested in learning. Based on the description above, the researcher would like to know the students’ ability in writing a paragraph, especially for the exposition paragraph of the second year students of the English Department at Bung Hatta University.

At the English Department curriculum of Bung Hatta University, writing is divided into three, they are writing sentence, writing paragraph, and writing essay. Hence, writing paragraph is one of the main subjects which has been offered in the English Department. This is considered an initial skill that must be mastered by the students before finally plunging into scientific writing. In writing a paragraph, the students can express their ideas, thought, feeling, and give information to others; It also taught students how to think critically in the writing process. Critical thinking is any mental activity that helps formulate or solve problems, make decisions, or fulfill the desire to understand (Faturrohman & Sulistyorini, 2012).

In fact, writing exposition is one way to improve students’ critical thinking skills. Whether that is an exposition paragraph or an exposition essay. By writing an exposition paragraph, students are forced to think and develop their ideas. Writing a paragraph exposition also makes students think in detail about how to write well, connect each sentence, and create their argument/thesis sentences.

In fact, the student’s ability in thinking critically about writing an exposition paragraph is still quite low. This is supported by one of the journals that written by Niken Palupi Ramadhani (2019) with the title “Pembelajaran Menulis Teks Eksposisi Berbantuan Media Audio Visual dalam Upaya Meningkatkan Kemampuan Berpikir Kritis”. The result showed that as many as 24 students with a percentage of 67% admitted have difficulty in writing expository text. The difficulty that the students feel is to find the topics, difficulty to develop ideas into paragraphs, lack of interest in reading and writing, and didn't understand the structure of the exposition text. Therefore, the exposition text produced by students has not reached the criteria of completeness minimum, this shows that student’s critical thinking skills are still low.

* 1. **The Identification of the Problem**

Based on the background of the problem above, there are many problems that might occur in identifying students’ ability in writing an exposition paragraph. The first is making the content. Students have a lack of ideas and don’t know how to express their information and feelings well in writing paragraphs, it can be concluded that students can’t develop their ideas into interesting content which have good and complete information. The second is the organization. In organizing sentences in writing paragraphs, it is difficult for students to develop their ideas also arrange sentences in paragraphs that must be continuous and composing one sentence and another which must be smooth. Other difficulties that were found like repeating keywords, using consistent pronouns, using transition signals to connect ideas, and organize ideas in logical order.The third is choosing appropriate vocabulary. Students are required to be able to sort out the appropriate words that according to the sentences being developed. Students need broad insight in the introduction of words either new or they have learned. So, some students have difficulty in vocabulary selection due to the limitations of the vocabulary and lack of the number of vocabulary to learn and memorize. The fourth is written with the correct grammar. Students don’t understand grammar properly in conveying ideas. The discussion of grammar issues will cover the types of error tenses especially for the students who do not repeat the grammar learning that has been taught. The last is putting the correct mechanics. In writing paragraphs, there are still some students who wrote with inappropriate symbols, capitalization, and spelling. The Student’s problems in writing that might occur which have been described by the researchers in the paragraph above are supported by the journal from previous research by Sukarta Kartawijaya (2018) with the title "Improving Students' Writing Skills in Writing Paragraph through an Outline Technique" which has been explained earlier in the background of the problem. It is also supported by previous research by Aida Asti Adekayanti (2017), with the title “the students writing ability of the eleventh grade students of SMAN 1 Labuapi in the academic year 2017/ 2018” there were several kinds of writing difficulties that she found. First, in writing the generic structure, students were unable to use the generic structure completely. Second, in developing the ideas, the students were unable to make a paragraph. It was also followed by a lack of vocabulary, grammatical errors, and wrote with inappropriate mechanics.

* 1. **The Limitation of the Problem**

Concerning the identification of the problem above, the researcher limited this research to students’ ability in writing an exposition paragraphs. It focused on investigating the students’ ability to write a paragraph; specifically on expressing the content, organize the relevant idea, the accuracy of using vocabulary, the accuracy of using correct grammar specifically in the sentence structure also the use of sentences according to the time of occurrence, and the accuracy of using mechanics. Here, the researcher would like to see how the students could write an exposition paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University in the 2020/2021 academic year.

**1.4 TheFormulation of the Research**

After focusing on the research problem, the researcher formulated the research problem: ***How is the second year students’ ability in writing an exposition paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University?***

* 1. **The Research Questions**

From the formulation of the problem above, the researcher formulated the research questions as follows:

1) How is the secondyear students’ ability to express the content in writing an exposition paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University?

2) How is the second year students’ ability to organize the relevant idea in writing an exposition paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University?

3) How is the second year students’ ability to use appropriate vocabulary in writing an exposition paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University?

4) How is the second year students’ ability to use correct grammar in writing an exposition paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University?

5) How is the second year students’ ability to use appropriate mechanics in writing an exposition paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University?

* 1. **The Purposes of the Research**

The purpose of this research is to find out the second year students’ ability in writing exposition paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University. Specifically, this research is to describe the following:

1) The second year students’ ability to express the content in writing an exposition paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University.

2) The second year students’ ability to organize the idea in writing an exposition at the English Department of Bung Hatta University.

3) The second year students’ ability to use appropriate vocabulary in writing an exposition paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University.

4) The second year students’ ability to use correct grammar in writing an exposition paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University.

5) The second year students’ ability to use appropriate mechanics in writing an exposition paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University.

**1.7 The Significance of the Research**

The researcher wanted this research could give a contribution to the lecturers and the students. For the lecturers, the researcher hopes this research could remind their students’ ability in writing exposition paragraphs and improve it. For the students, the researcher hopes this research could make them know their abilities and enriches them about information of writing exposition paragraph.

* 1. **The Definition of Key Terms**

To clarify and avoid misunderstanding, the following are the definition of the key terms:

1. Exposition paragraph is a paragraph that tries to convey information and non-fiction writing. The purpose of the exposition paragraph is to give information to readers in an organized format. It explains about reasons, step, and facts about something can happen.

2. Content is a form of ideas, thoughts, feelings, or information that is packaged and written according to the needs of the writing itself.

3. Organization is how ideas in writing are presented. Typically, the organization refers to the larger parts of a piece of writing, it includes the topic sentence, supporting sentence, and conclusion sentence in paragraph if possible.

4. Vocabulary is a set of words that are owned by someone.

5. Grammar is the set of rules that explains how words are used in a language.

6. Generic structure is a pattern or flow that is presented in a stage of mapping ideas or information in a text.

7. Mechanics are provisions that regulate technical aspects of writing such as spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and abbreviations.