

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

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

1.1 The Background of the Problem

In learning English, writing is one of the skills that we have to master. There are four skills in learning English, they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is a uniquely individual undertaking and the same person may utilize dissimilar strategies to express himself or herself. Commonly, the writing process approach emphasizes that writing involves various stages which are fluid and overlapping. Kamehameha Schools (2007) states that the writing process are pre-writing, drafting and writing, sharing and responding, revising and editing, and publishing. Furthermore, there are some processes or stages of writing. They are prewriting to acquire ideas, writing, reviewing, and revising as mentioned by Zemach and Islam in Sari (2005: 49). In addition, those steps are alike to prewriting, writing, and editing. The prewriting stage is a stage once the writer thinks carefully and devise her/his ideas for paragraph before she/he starts writing. The writing stage is a stage when the writer turns her/his thoughts into sentences. The editing stage is when the writer checks her/his paragraph for mistakes and correct them. The writer needs to check language structure and spelling, and the style and organization of the writing.

In conclusion, there are two variants of writing processes. First is mentioned by Kamehameha Schools (2007) that the writing processes are pre-writing, drafting and writing, sharing and responding, revising and editing, and publishing. Second is cited by Zemach and Islam in Sari (2005: 49) that writing processes are prewriting, writing, and editing.

Based on the curriculum used at the English Department of Bung Hatta University, several subjects promote writing skills. Those are Introductory Writing, Sentence Writing, Paragraph Writing, and Essay Writing. The second year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University have learned Paragraph Writing. In Paragraph Writing, the students learned about a review of simple sentences, review of compound sentences, review of complex sentences, review of compound-complex sentences, paragraph structure, paragraph development, paragraph of description, paragraph of explanation, paragraph of narration, paragraph of argumentation, paragraph of definition, paragraph of comparison and contrast, paragraph of illustration-example, and paragraph of cause and effect.

Based on the researcher's interviewed on December 2nd, 2020 with the second year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University through WhatsApp, it was found that they still had difficulties writing a paragraph. They found difficulties to select the correct tenses in writing a paragraph. In addition, they were still confused about how to write a topic sentence and develop a good paragraph. Furthermore, lack of vocabulary and incorrect use of punctuation are also problems for them.

Based on the description above, the researcher wanted to know the second year students' ability to write a paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University.

1.2 The Identification of the Problem

Writing can be classified into at least three types; they are sentence writing, paragraph writing, and essay writing. In Sentence Writing class, the students study simple sentences in present tense, simple sentences in past tense, simple sentences in present continuous tense, simple sentences in past continuous tense, simple sentences in simple future using *will*, or *shall*, *be (is, am, are)*, *going to*, simple sentences using modals, simple sentences in present perfect tense, passive sentences, compound sentences in simple future tense, complex sentences having adjective clauses, complex sentences having noun clauses, and complex sentences having adverbial clauses. In Paragraph Writing class, the second year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University study about many types of paragraphs, such as paragraph of description, paragraph of explanation, paragraph of narration, paragraph of argumentation, paragraph of definition, paragraph of comparison and contrast, paragraph of illustration-example, and paragraph of cause and effect. In Essay Writing class, the students study introductory paragraph, body paragraph, concluding body paragraph, and develop a correct essay.

There are some components of writing for the writer can write a good paragraph. Those are content, organization (topic sentence, supporting sentences, concluding sentence, and transitional words), vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.

The narrative is one of the paragraphs that the students learned. According Heard & Tucker (2016: 67), “A narrative paragraph tells a story and its purpose is to provide information about an event. In a narrative paragraph, events are related to the writer in the correct chronological order as they happened.” In addition, according to Refnita (2016: 127), “Narration or narrative paragraphs tell a chain of events to create a story with a significant meaning. The story told in a narrative paragraph usually depicts an event from the writer’s life.” In writing a narrative paragraph, the writer could write about a fictional story or a factual story. According to Pardiyono (2016: 80), fairy tales or folklores such as the story of Malin Kundang, Tangkuban Perahu, Roro Jongrang, and Danau Toba belong to fictional stories. On the other hand, writing the happiest accident is an example of a factual story in a narrative paragraph. In this research, the researcher focused on the factual story.

In writing a narrative paragraph, some parts are the same as other types of paragraphs. First, a topic sentence is a sentence that indicates a central idea to be developed all over a paragraph (Refnita, 2020: 2). Second, supporting sentences are used to support the topic (Savage & Shafiei, 2007: 5). Third, transitional expressions are used to make a paragraph well structured. In addition, the concluding sentence repeats the information in a topic sentence in a dissimilar way (Savage & Shafiei, 2007: 5).

Some of the second year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University still had difficulties writing a narrative paragraph. The researcher asked them through WhatsApp on April 9th, 2021, and they said that they were still

confused to write supporting sentences because they did not know whether their sentences were enough to support their topic sentence or not yet. In addition, the rules of grammar were also a problem for them because they have not mastered grammar yet.

1.3 The Limitation of the Problem

Based on the identification of the problem that has already been discussed, the researcher limited her study to the second year students' ability in writing a narrative paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University in the academic year 2020/2021. The writing aspects that were evaluated are the content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics.

1.4 The Formulation of the Problem

Based on the limitation of the problem above, the researcher formulated the problem of the research as “How was the second year students' ability in writing a narrative paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University”?

1.5 Research Questions

Based on the formulation of the problem above, the research questions of this study are as the following:

1. How was the second year students' ability to express the content of a narrative paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University?

2. How was the second year students' ability to organize a narrative paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University?
3. How was the second year students' ability to use vocabulary in writing a narrative paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University?
4. How was the second year students' ability to apply grammar in writing a narrative paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University?
5. How was the second year students' ability to apply mechanics in writing a narrative paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University?

1.6 Purposes of the Research

The main purpose of this research was to find out the second-year students' ability in writing a narrative paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University. Specifically, the purposes of this research were as follows:

1. To find out the second year students' ability to express the content of a narrative paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University.
2. To find out the second year students' ability to organize a narrative paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University.
3. To find out the second year students' ability to use vocabulary in writing a narrative paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University.
4. To find out the second year students' ability to apply grammar in writing a narrative paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University.

5. To find out the second year students' ability to apply mechanics in writing a narrative paragraph at the English Department of Bung Hatta University.

1.7 The Significance of the Research

This research is expected to give contributions to the lecturers and the students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University, and future researchers. For the lecturers, it could give scientific information about students' ability in writing a narrative paragraph. For the second year students at the English Department of Bung Hatta University, they will know their ability in writing a narrative paragraph and it can increase their motivation in studying about writing. For future researchers, this research can be used as their reference.

1.8 The Definition of the Key Terms

There are some of the key terms that are defined to avoid misunderstanding of the terms used in this research, they are:

1. Ability is the capability to do something, such as the ability to write a narrative paragraph.
2. Writing is the skill of expressing ideas in a paper.
3. Writing a paragraph is the act of writing down the sentences into paragraphs. The paragraph consists of three parts; those are topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence.

4. Narrative paragraph is a paragraph that tells a chain of events to create a story with a significant meaning. The story told in a narrative paragraph usually depicts an event from the writer's life.