

## **CHAPTER I**

### **Introduction**

#### **1.1. Background of the Study**

English as an international language is used in many countries as the language to communicate both with foreign and local people. English is not only used as a medium to communicate but also used in many aspects of life such as business, education, and others. Therefore, many people have started to learn English.

Morrow (2013) states that the four language skills to be learned are speaking, writing, listening, and reading. Besides those four skills, there are also four language components that have to be learned in English. They are pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. The four language skills and components never stand out as individual areas but they form a chain cycle that affects one another.

Realizing that English is very important, most of elementary school in Indonesia start teach their students English subjects (Sepyanda, 2017). Elementary school students started to learn speaking, reading, listening, and writing in English. Although the students start to learn English since they were in primary school, English is still a difficult subject to be learned even for university students. Putra (2015) states that the four language skills and the language components are difficult for the students. As the consequence, many students get low marks in English (Ibrahim, 2011).

Students learn English in order to be able to communicate. To communicate well, students need to be able to speak and write. According to Redeker (2015), spoken language tends to be unplanned, informal, and directed to a limited number of receivers while written language tends to be well-planned and the writers can polish their writing to be communicative, aesthetic, and formal.

According to Langan (2008), writing is a skill that requires practices; the more students practice the better their writing would be. There are numerous ways the teachers can give to the students in order to make the students get practice in writing. One of them is writing a journal. With a daily journal, the students can express their opinions, feelings, ideas, and others. Langan (2011) states that keeping a daily or almost daily journal can be a great way to practice writing.

According to Hiemstra (2001), journaling is a means for recording personal thoughts, daily experiences, and developing insights. The form of journals can be a book, a binder full of papers, a collection of electrical particles on a computer disk, or an audiotape (Suzana, 2018). Journals are forms of self-report that allow learners to record their thoughts, feelings, achievements, and problems, their impressions of other people (Hogue, 2000).

Tompkins (2004) mentions that there are five kinds of journals. They are personal journals, dialogue journals, reading logs, and learning logs. Moreover, Hiemstra (2011) classified the journals into nine. They are learning journals, diaries, dream books, autobiographies, spiritual journals, interactive reading log, theory log, and electrical journals.

By writing a journal routinely, the students would get some benefits. Orem (1996) states that journal writing is the potential for positive reinforcement. Journals provide strong potentialities for analysis and understanding of the social process that occurred inside the classroom. Rossetti (1998) states that journal writing helps the students to improve the students' creativity, self-expression, provide a means for personal growth and intellectual exploration, and understand the most pressing needs. Not only that, but students would also improve their ability to organize their writing. The students started to apply the writing knowledge they got about writing organizations from the students' class. The students would be able to organize their paragraphs chronologically (Yulianti, 2014).

There are a lot of elements in writing. They are content, language use, organization, vocabulary, and mechanics. From the writing elements mentioned, the organization plays an important role in someone's writing. In line with the elements of writing, Harjanto (2011) states that although the writers have information and knowledge about a language, they may not be able to write effectively. Besides, students should be able to organize them using the language effectively.

Writing organization is the arrangement of ideas. The writing organization mostly started from the general idea into the specific one. This is called deductive organization. The organization can also be started from the specific idea to the general one. This organization called inductive organization (Arnaudet & Barrett, 1984).

All paragraphs should be coherent and unified. The idea of coherence and unity is similar because a well-organized paragraph should have the quality of coherence and unity. Coherence is the result of the interpretation of the meaning of the text and it depends on the relation between the audience and the text (Tanskanen, 2006). Unity is one and direct explanation of the main idea as states in the topic sentence (Oshima & Hogue, 1999, p.30). If the organization of writing is coherent and unified, the ideas would be easily understood. On the other hand, if the organization is not coherent or unified, it would be hard to understand.

To communicate the ideas effectively, the students should look out to the organization of their essay. All essays have three elements: introduction, body, and conclusion (Oshima & Houge 2006; Paltidge & Starfield 2007; Swales & Feak 2009). The students should concern to every part of the essay they write to make the essay easy to understand (Harjanto, 2011). Understanding organization is important for the students. Although students have good word choices and all the sentences are error-free, the writing would be hard to be understood if the ideas are not well-organized. The writer should write consistently and logically to make the writing coherent and unified.

At the university level, the students, especially English Department students, are expected to be able to write academically. According to Siswanti & Harjanto (2018), constructing academic writing is more challenging for EFL students rather than writing a non-academic paper.

Organizing ideas is not easy for students. According to Bloor & Bloor (1993); Harjanto (1999, 2001, 2012); Sa'Addedin (1991), EFL students of the

university in Indonesia have a similar problem in writing English academic papers. They are finding ideas, rhetoric, and language. Harjanto (2011) also claims that students have difficulty to develop and organize ideas. Some of the students do not know how to put the ideas together and make the ideas coherent and unified. Therefore, English Education Departments in Indonesia offer writing courses in order to make students write properly and coherently.

Writing B course is a course offered in the English Education Department of a private university in Surabaya. The researcher decided to analyze Writing B class B academic year 2017/2018. The class consisted of 14 students. To take this class, the students should pass the Writing A course. Students taking writing B have understood how to write a paragraph and an essay in English. According to the Writing B course syllabus, the learning objectives were the students would be able to write recounts, narratives, (auto)biographies, news items, reports, and descriptions coherently and cohesively.

In the Writing B course, the students learn the purpose, types, and generic structure of text types both inside and outside the class. In this course, the students were given two kinds of assignments which were classroom assignment and home assignment. Classroom assignment was the assignment that should be done in the classroom such as individual and group writing. The home assignment was the assignment that should be done outside the classroom like writing journals. Each student should make 6 journals in six months. It means, the students should make one journal in two weeks.

This study was important to be conducted because there were reflections the lecturers can get from the findings such as how deep the students understand the topics the lecturer taught inside the classroom and applied the knowledge such as the knowledge of organization, coherence, and unity of writing in their journals.

This study describes the organization, coherence, and unity of the journals written by the students taking Writing B. According to the syllabus of the Writing course, the organization, coherence, and unity were the values of good writing. Analyzing the journals as the source of the study was also important because journal writing is a benchmark of the students' understanding of the teacher's explanation in the classroom (Hiemstra, 2011). In other words, the journals were the implementation of the knowledge the students get in the classroom.

## **1.2. Statements of the Problem**

In line with the background of the study, the research questions are:

1. How was the generic structure of journals written by the English Education Department students?
2. What cohesive devices were used in the journals written by the English Education Department students?
3. How was the unity of journals written by the English Education Department students?

## **1.3. The Objectives of the Study**

The purposes of this study are:

1. To describe the generic structure of journals written by the English Education Department students' journals.

2. To describe the cohesive devices of journals written by the English Education Department students.
3. To describe the unity of journals written by the English Education Department students.

#### **1.4. Theoretical Framework**

The researcher uses the theory of essay organization of (Oshima & Hogue 2006; Paltidge & Starfield 2007; Swales & Feak 2009). An essay has three elements which are introduction, body, and conclusion. Each element has its own function. All paragraphs in an essay must be related one to another. An introduction provides the background and thesis statements. A thesis statement is used to be the controlling idea. Introduction paragraph looks like a funnel because it starts from the most general to the most specific information (Oshima & Hogue 2016:104). Harjanto (2011: 33) states that the concluding paragraph provides a summary of the main problem, the explanation of the thesis statement with different words, and comments from the writer. Body paragraphs developed deductively and have two elements which are topic sentence and supporting sentences (Swales dan Feak, 2009; Oshima dan Hogue, 2006; Bensen-Meyers, 1992). Because the types of text in the journals were mostly recounting, the researcher also relies on the theory of a recount text. According to Derewianka (1990), the generic structure of a recount text is orientation, events, and re-orientation.

The researcher also relies on the theory of coherence. According to Taboada (2004: 158), coherence is the hanging together of the text with relation to its

context of situation or culture. Yule (2008) states that coherence is everything fitting together and it is not something that exists in words or structures, but something that exists in people. Coherence can be achieved through cohesion. Waller (2015) states that cohesion can help the writer to achieve coherence. It can be concluded that cohesion is a part of coherence. Halliday and Hasan (1976) classifies cohesion into two, there are grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion.

### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

This study provided information about journals written by English Education Department students specifically about the organization, coherence, and unity. Hence, this study provided information about the ability of English Education Department students in organizing a coherent and unified recount essay with journals as a medium.

### **1.6. Assumption**

The students taking writing B wrote 6 journals during the semester. Besides writing in the classroom, they wrote journals as home assignments. Hence, they have a chance to practice not only inside but also outside the classroom.

### **1.7. Limitation and Scope**

The object of this study were the journals written by the students taking writing B academic year 2017/2018. Writing B course class B academic year 2017/2018 consisted of 14 students. They had started writing journals since they were taking writing A course. Therefore, this was the second time they had the assignment to write journals.



The journals were written by students taking Writing B academic year 2017/2018. The ideas for the writing were not dictated by the lecturer. Every student was free to choose his or her own topics. Before writing the journal, the students were given general guidance about the format of the journals.

The scope of this study was the organization, coherence, and unity of journals written by students taking writing B. Hence, as long as the sentence was still organized-well, coherent, and unified, it can still be tolerated because grammar and word usage were not the focus of the study.

### **1.8. Definition of Key Terms**

- Essay organization is the construction of the ideas arranged in paragraphs and divided into three main parts: introductory, body, and concluding paragraphs (Harjanto, 2011).
- Journal is an assignment written by the students at home. The journal told students' private experiences in the form of a recount text.
- Coherence is a connection among sentences in a paragraph that can be achieved through cohesion (Halliday and Hasan, 1976). There are two types of cohesion. They are grammatical cohesion which includes reference, substitutions, ellipsis, and conjunction and lexical cohesion which includes reiteration and collocation.
- Unity is the state of developing one main idea in a paragraph with supporting sentences or one thesis in an essay with related paragraphs. Paragraph unity is achieved if the supporting sentences are related to the topic sentence (Oshima

& Hogue, 2006). The unity of an essay is achieved if all body paragraphs and concluding paragraphs discuss the thesis statement.

### **1.9. Organization of the Study**

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter covers the background of the study, objectives, theoretical framework, significance of the study, assumption, limitation, and scope, and the last is the definition of key terms. The second chapter covers the review of related literature and related studies. The third chapter discusses the research method of this study. The fourth chapter covers findings and discussions. The fifth chapter presents the conclusions and suggestions.