

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, the research problems, the objective of the study, the theoretical framework, the significance of the study, the assumption, the scope and limitation of the study, and the definition of the key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

In this globalization era, English is widely used whether as a second language or as a foreign language to interact across culture in a way that has never been done before. As a language, English has four separate skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening and reading are known as the receptive skills; while speaking and writing are known as the productive skills. Among those skills, writing has been proven to be the most difficult language skill for learners of English as a second language or English as a foreign language (Ong 2011; Ting, 2003). Writing requires the mastery of various sub-skills. As a complex skill, writing deals with a set of rules that influence the use of language such as grammar, spelling, and punctuation. In addition, in written communication, the writer is not in direct contact with readers and cannot get direct feedback from them. Therefore, there is no help in term of nonverbal

expression that carries the additional information so the writer has to write in a way that makes the message clear for the reader and leave no misunderstanding or any other interpretation of any type.

The acquisition of good writing skill requires not just an ability to construct grammatical sentences but also an ability to create a meaningful text. If the writer only applies the grammatical rules mechanically, he will make the text as a group of isolated sentences with no relation to one another. Therefore, it is important to show logical relations in a text and help the readers to connect different units and paragraphs to make sense of the text using the appropriate conjunctions. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), conjunction is one of the four kinds cohesive devices which are important to express certain meanings which presuppose the presence of other components in the discourse. Conjunctions increase the readability of a text and indicate links between sentences so the readers understand the text clearly.

Discussion is one of the text genres in writing which has been taught since senior high school. Discussion is a text that presents different opinions, viewpoints, or perspectives on a particular issue or topic. Writing discussion text helps the students to be critical on presenting different viewpoints on an issue. In writing discussion text, the students have to use kinds of conjunctions, such as: additive, adversative, causal, and temporal. These conjunctions help the students to construct arguments in a clear and coherent way. Moreover, the students are expected to avoid the monotonous writing caused by repetition or lack of variety in the use of conjunctions. Binh (2014) and Hamed (2013) have shown the

inappropriate use of conjunctions by ESL and EFL students. These studies found that the students have difficulties in the application of conjunctions.

In this study, the writer would like to find out the frequency of using conjunctions showing additive, adversative, causal and temporal and the students' appropriate and inappropriate use of conjunctions in their discussion texts.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background of the study above, the research problems to be answered in this study are formulated as follows:

1. What are the most and least frequently used conjunctions showing additive, adversative, causal, and temporal in the discussion texts made by Writing IV students of the English Department?
2. What are the appropriately and inappropriately used conjunctions showing additive, adversative, causal, and temporal in the discussion texts made by Writing IV students of the English Department?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

According to the problem above, the objectives of the study are determined as follows:

1. To find out the most and least frequently used conjunctions showing additive, adversative, causal, and temporal in discussion texts made by Writing IV students of the English Department.
2. To find the appropriately and inappropriately used conjunctions showing additive, adversative, causal, and temporal used appropriately or inappropriately in discussion texts made by Writing IV students of the English Department.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

This thesis makes use of three theories. They are the theory of error, conjunctions and theory of discussion text. The theory of error is used to explain the term “inappropriate” in this study. The writer uses the theory of conjunctions proposed by Halliday and Hasan’s (1976) as it provides the most comprehensive taxonomy of cohesive devices for analysing the ties. Halliday and Hasan (1976) categorise conjunctions into four subcategories: *additive*, *adversative*, *causal* and *temporal*.

The theory of discussion text is also used in order to analyze the discussion texts made by Writing IV students. Barwick (1999) states that discussion text presents different opinions, viewpoints or perspectives on an issue

1.5 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to foster the English teachers' awareness toward the students' mastery in the use of conjunctions in their discussion texts. It provides better information about the inappropriate use of conjunctions which the teachers can use to improve the techniques and the effectiveness of teaching conjunctions. The English teachers are also expected that by understanding the students' difficulties, they will be able to help the students minimize the errors.

1.6 Assumption

This study is carried out under the assumption that:

1. The students use conjunctions to show additive, adversative, causal, and temporal relations in their discussion texts.
2. The students are familiar with the use of all kinds of conjunctions in writing.

1.7 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study focuses on the use of conjunctions although there are some other errors (e.g grammar, spelling and punctuation) found in their discussion texts. The types of conjunctions analyzed in the students' work are additive,

adversative, causal, temporal. She chooses the Writing IV students of the English Department in the academic year of 2013-2014 and conducted a study on their knowledge of using conjunctions in their discussion texts.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

1. Conjunction

Conjunction is one of the four kinds of cohesive devices in texts, expressing four meanings: additive, adversative, causal and temporal in the discourse (Halliday & Hasan, 1976).

2. Discussion Text

Discussion text is the essay written by the students which present different opinions, viewpoints, or perspectives on a particular issue or topic.

3. Writing IV

Writing IV is one of compulsory subjects offered to the students in the fifth semester of the English Department of a private university in Surabaya.

4. Appropriate

Appropriate is suitable, acceptable or correct for the particular circumstances.

5. Inappropriate

Inappropriate refers to errors which deviate from a selected norm of a language performance and reflect the interlanguage competence of the learner.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study consists of three chapters. Chapter I is the introduction which presents background of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, theoretical framework, significance of the study, assumption, scope and limitation of the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the thesis. Chapter II is the review of related literature which discusses errors and mistakes, conjunctions, discussion text and review of some related studies. Chapter III is the research method which deals with the research design, subject, instruments, data collection procedure and data analysis technique. Chapter IV is the findings and discussions of the study. The last chapter is the conclusion and suggestion.