

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer presents the background of the research problem, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the theoretical framework, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the study, the definition of key terms, and the organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

There are two forms of communication, namely verbal and non-verbal. One example of verbal communication is writing. Writing is an important part of everyday life since it is a means of communicating ideas and information. McMahan and Day (1984:4) state, “The reason for putting words on paper in the first place is to communicate, to convey ideas, information, or impressions from your mind to the minds of your readers.” Through writing, people around the world communicate what they have in mind; from a professional journalist up to an ordinary senior high student. They all write to communicate their ideas, feeling, and opinions.

However, writing is not an easy task to do. It is because a good writing is not supposed to be monotonous; it should be colorful and lively. Writing a good composition is begun with writing a good sentence. According to Christ and Carlin (1987:1), “Before you write well you must learn some basic skills, before you write a long composition you have to be able to write a paragraph, and before you write a good paragraph you have to write a good sentence.”

The way to express an idea into a sentence can be done in many different ways. One of them is by varying sentence types. There are four form-based types of sentences, as many experts explain, namely, simple sentences, compound sentences, complex sentences, and compound-complex sentences. Rubin (1983:254) states, “Variety in sentence structure usually helps to make writing more interesting to read.” Having the same view, Williams and Blake (1992: 341) say, “Sentence variety makes writing more interesting and pleasurable to read as it imitates the wide range of rhythms of speech.” That is why, the more sentence types used in writing, the more interesting one’s writing can be.

Although there are four form-based types of sentences in variance, not all are used in students’ writing. The students sometimes tend to be dominant in a certain type of sentence only. In other words, they sometimes tend to give one type of sentence a bigger portion than the rest. It might be caused by the lack of practice on using variety of form-based sentence types, especially on those which require a more complex structure like the use of dependent and independent clauses.

In addition, in writing a good composition, grammar, vocabulary, cohesiveness, coherence, or unity of the composition itself are indeed important. Yet, the way the students put an idea or thought into a sentence is essential as well. If the students keep dominantly writing a certain type of sentence, their writing will be boring and not exciting. Goffman and Berkowitz (1990:14) state “The best writers use a variety of sentence type.” Hence, it is important to use various sentence types in their writing to make it more interesting and pleasurable to read.

Since the students have got some knowledge about form-based sentence types in senior high school and IC (Intensive Course), and more importantly, since form-based sentence types are essential in making students' writings more interesting to read, the writer is interested to find what form-based sentence types are found in their compositions.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the above background, the writer wants to find the answer to the following problem:

What form-based sentence types are found in the compositions of the third semester students of the English Department of Widya Mandala University?

1.3 Objective of the Study

This study aims at knowing what form-based sentence types are found in the compositions of the third semester students of the English Department of Widya Mandala University.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The theory underlying in this study is the theory of writing and form-based sentence types.

Writing, as defined by Brown (1968), is the skill of arranging words to form sentences, sentences to form paragraphs and paragraphs to form larger units so that thought may be communicated to others. A good writer should be able to form sentences that will best communicate his thoughts, ideas, or opinions. Carino (1991) states that sentences are an

essential aspect in writing. The use of good sentence structure in writing can make an adequate essay good and a good essay excellent.

There are four form-based types of sentences in all according to William and Blake (1992), namely simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex. A simple sentence is a sentence that consists of a single independent clause which has both a subject and a complete verb and expresses a complete thought. A compound sentence is a sentence that is composed of two or more simple sentences (independent clauses). A complex sentence is a sentence that is composed of one independent clause and at least one dependent (subordinate) clause. A compound-complex sentence is a sentence that contains at least two independent clauses with at least one independent clause connected to one of the independent clauses.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that the findings of this study can be used as feedback, especially to writing III and IV lecturers, to improve students' writing. If the results show that the third semester students of the English Department of Widya Mandala still produce one type of sentence dominantly, especially simple sentences, the lecturers can do something to improve it. The lecturers can be more active to encourage the students to use more various form-based sentence types in making a composition.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

In this study, the writer limits the discussion only on the variety of form-based sentence types - simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex - used in the compositions of the third semester students of the

English Department of 2011-2012 academic year. Sentences with small mistakes like subject-verb agreement are still included in this study. Phrases are excluded in this study. Besides, the text type used in this study is descriptive.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

In the study, the writer uses some terms. The key terms to be defined are:

1. Form-based sentence types

The classification of sentences which falls into four categories, namely simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex.

2. Simple sentence

A sentence that consists of a single independent clause which has both a subject and a complete verb and expresses a complete thought. (Williams and Blake, 1992:341)

3. Compound sentence

A sentence that is composed of two or more simple sentences (independent clauses). (Williams and Blake, 1992:342)

4. Complex sentence

A sentence that is composed of one independent clause and at least one dependent (subordinate) clause. (Williams and Blake, 1992:342)

5. Compound-complex sentence

A sentence that contains at least two independent clauses with at least one dependent clause connected to one of the independent clauses. (Williams and Blake, 1992:342)

6. Composition

The composition in this study is descriptive composition, which is defined as one type of genres which presents a picture, showing the readers how something – a person, a place, or an object- looks, feels, tastes, or what it sounds like.

1.8 Organization of the Study

This thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is introduction that includes the background of the research problem, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the theoretical framework, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the study, the definition of key terms, and the organization of the study. The second chapter deals with the review of related literature. Research method is presented in Chapter III. While Chapter IV displays the data analysis, the findings and the discussion. In the last chapter, the writer gives conclusion and some suggestions.