CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the background of the study, and highlights on the statement of problem. This chapter also states the objective of the study. Based on the statement of problem, the researcher identifies the research question. This chapter also discusses the research scope and limitation of the study as well as the significance of the study conducted. The final part of this chapter discusses some key terms which are related with the study.

A. Background

Writing skill is more and more important nowadays. Becoming a proficient writer is a major objective for many students such as those who want to become members of international business, administrative or academic communities. Most business professionals need excellent writing skills to properly convey ideas and concepts. For instance, when the bosses write emails to employees, those written messages should be concise and self-explanatory, it makes the workers can be productive and not waste time asking for further instructions. Additionally, a company's advertising materials have to be written effectively in order to get the costumer's attention and get them to read the

¹ Tribble, C, Writing: Second Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) p.8

company's offers. Secondly, an administrative assistant needs skills in standard written English and in business English. She or he will assist with typing and formatting her/his boss' presentations, reports, newsletters, website content and other administrative publications. Lastly, academic community needs academic writing skill to communicate the ideas and information effectively. Academic writing must be objective, can express ideas precisely and have the right level of formality. For example, organization should be able to write a letter, memos, reports, or composing proposal for some purposes. Those are obvious that writing skills are very needed at these days. Therefore, the students are insisted to have ability and proficiency in written language.

Writing has significant purpose as the main tool for learning. Encouraging critical thinking and exploring thoughts are the valuable one. Writing is to encourage active thinking and learning. Writing exercises have a place in every university classroom. Student will write assignment that may be one paragraph or several paragraphs, or they will answers for test and exams that may be a few sentences, a paragraph or two, or a complete essay. This clearly illustrates how writing can build the critical thinking. Furthermore, exploring ideas through writing becomes a great way in learning. Writing tasks are a must for every student in college, even in composing thesis writing as the final project. Some kinds of writing such as analytical writing or descriptive writing need lots information from the author's mind. Writing can elaborate our thought. Authors

are demanded to come out their ideas, argumentation, and premise or opinion. As a result, writing becomes main device to takes essential function in learning.

Academic writing such argumentative, hortatory or single paragraph writing is a major challenge for students of English education department. They should have lots of vocabulary, much information, and logic writing. To begin with, student needs an essential tool to build good writing. When they have a writing assignment, a good vocabulary is a necessary tool. Students will be able to choose the best word among the several synonyms with similar meaning. It makes the readers find a good sense of the writer's meaning. Indeed, use strong vocabulary will give the reader good information. Secondly, writing is a kind of productive skill. Writers should have much information to pour out the ideas. Any writing assignment requires writers to gather information. They need to do some readings to develop their thinking, and then hone the ideas through their writing. Lastly, building a logic and structure writing is also the main challenge. Writers should focus through their ideas and be able to translate these ideas into readable text for their intended readers. For example, when writers want to convey their purpose in English, they rely heavily on a translation dictionary. However it is not always accurate because they usually translate a sentence word-for-word without considering the meaning of the whole sentence. Writing should make sense through transitions, signal phrases, and verbs. Hence, students should take into consideration about the challenge to build a good writing.

Argumentative writing is a great topic in learning and becoming a priority for some reasons. First of all, evidence and clear analysis becomes a focus of argument. A well-written argumentative essay has quality evidence and a clear thesis that is supported by each subsequent paragraph. Even, students need to comprehend the logical process of gathering evidence, and then linking evidence to their argument. Furthermore, Argumentative writing prepares students for the real world beyond the school walls. Argument is important in all disciplines. It is the main skill to our success as citizens, students and workers. It can help the students to evaluate products and services for themselves.

The certain structures of argumentative essay include of three formats; introduction, background information, and body paragraph. In the first place, introduction should be interesting enough to catch the readers to read more. Argumentative essays can start with facts, statistics, or quotes that reference the topic of the essay. Then, an introduction must consist a thesis statement. It explains the writer's proves, and also provides an overview of the arguments into body paragraph. Next, a background paragraph is not always required in an argumentative essay. However it may be essential in writing since the information can make the readers be aware to understand the writer's topic. Last, body paragraphs have significant function to prove the author's argument of the thesis statement. The body paragraphs should start with a topic sentence written in own words of the writer. Hence, critical thinking is needed to explain the evidence in proving the writer's overall point. No matter how good an argument

or idea is, it will not work if the students cannot logically outline their research and make a coherent analysis.

The students of fourth semester of English education department have argumentative writing course. In this study, the researcher analyzes coherence and unity of argumentative essay. In the first place, the students have experienced in some lectures in the previous. They have learned in paragraph writing and essay writing courses. That is a good provision to persist in producing a good writing of argumentative essay. However, building a good writing is not simple enough. Still, many students face the difficulties in organizing ideas and connecting the sentences when build paragraph. In other words, their writing is lack of coherence and unity.

In composing a good writing, coherence and unity play a crucial role. According to Oshima's and Hague's, a paragraph is a basic unit of organization in writing in which a group of related sentences develops one main idea.² The paragraph should be long enough to develop the main idea clearly. It is supported by Bram's theory; he said the word 'unity' is synonymous with 'oneness'.³ All sentences in a paragraph should focus on the one thing expressed in the topic sentence. The problem stated in the sentences has to be settled. Unity can be achieved as long as the paragraph has good and clear topic sentence. Even, Artkinson and Curtis cited in Paltridge and Starfield⁴ that composing an academic

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² Oshima, Alice and Hogue Ann. *Academic Writing Skill: the Third Edition*. (New York: Longman 1999). p. 17

³ Bram, Barli. Write. Well: Improving Writing Skills. Yogyakarta: Kanisius 1995).

writing is more than just getting ideas down on paper and being sure that they are in good English, but it is a fundamental ways in explaining our thoughts to develop our understanding.

An essay and a paragraph should have good relation to the thesis statement and topic sentence. All the sentences should flow smoothly from one to another and the relations between ideas are clear. Coherent writing informs that the relevant supporting ideas explain previous statements. Despite that, some writings have not clear meaning or difficult to be understood. One instance that shows how the paragraph may confusing to be understood is when the students discuss more than one topic in a single paragraph; also they cannot use the appropriate pronouns or transition signals in the paragraph. It is because the paragraph writing does not have unity, and the supporting details do not support the topic anymore, and it is caused of inappropriate words in connecting the sentences in the paragraph. Consequently, the condition automatically made the readers confused with the paragraph and they will not get the information from the paragraph.

The previous study titled *Students' Problems with Cohesion and Coherence in EFL Essay Writing in Egypt: Different Perspectives* by Abdel Hamid Ahmed, Helwan Faculty of Education, Egypt. The study focuses on the organizational problems that Egyptian student teachers of English encounter

⁴ Paltridge, Brian and Sue Starfield. *Thesis and Dissertation Writing in a Second Language*. (New York: Routledge, 2007) p.46

when they write an English essay. In particular, the study aims at investigating students' cohesion and coherence problems in EFL essay writing. The second research was conducted by Yulia Fitri Astuti titled *The Analysis of Coherence In The Background of Skripsi Written by English Education Department Students of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Muria Kudus University*. This research was to analyze the coherence in the background section of skripsi written by English Education Department students of Teacher Training and Education Faculty of Muria Kudus University 2010.

Some studies have been conducted to analyze about the essay or paragraph, however the difficulties of making a good writing cannot be just disregarded. Writing is a skill that cannot be said "simple". The author needs to unite the main skills they have, including grammar, vocabulary, and structure paragraph. One of the significance problems is focusing on analyzing the coherence and unity of a paragraph.

B. Statement of the Problem

This study attempts to find answer to the research question: How is the students' ability of building coherence and unity in argumentative writing at English department of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya?

C. Objectives of the Study

Considering the statements of the problem questioned on this study, this study is intended to observe whether the students' ability in writing an argumentative essay has good quality. In order to explain the case, it is necessary to know the students' ability of building coherence and unity in argumentative writing at English department of UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya.

D. Scope and Limitations

Writing is one of the most difficult skills to master in both the first language and second language.⁵ Furthermore, writing a paragraph cannot be separated by the certainty of its own characteristic, one of them is coherence and unity. Then, the scope of this research will focus on the coherence and unity essay analysis.

This research limits to the students of argumentative writing course at fourth semester in UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya's English Teacher Education Department because they have experienced in writing paragraph course and writing essay course in the previous semesters.

E. Significances of the Study

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⁵ Dorothy E Zemach & Carlos Islam, *Paragraph Writing*, (Oxford: MacMillan, 2005), p. 1

This study is expected to give insight that coherence and unity is the crucial requirement in writing an argumentative essay. It is also expected to be useful for:

- 1. Lecturer: it can inform the lecturer about the ability of fourth semester students in building coherence and unity writing of argumentative essay.
- 2. Students: it can inform students about their ability in building coherence and unity writing of argumentative essay. In addition, it can inform them the characteristics of good essay, so that they can improve their ability in writing.
- 3. Readers: it can give information about fourth semester students' ability in building coherence and unity writing of argumentative essay and inform the importance of building coherence and unity.

F. Definition of Key Terms

1. Ability is the quality of being able to do something, especially the physical, mental, financial, or legal power to accomplish something.⁶ In this research, the students need to be able to build coherence and unity well in writing argumentative essay.

⁶ The American Heritage, *Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition* (Houngton Miffin Company), 27.

- 2. Argumentative essay is a genre of writing that requires the student to investigate a topic; collect, generate, and evaluate evidence; and establish a position on the topic in a concise manner. The researcher chooses the essay by fourth semester of English education department that had a task of writing an academic writing, which is argumentative writing. It contains certain structure; they are introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion.
- **3.** Coherence essay is the combination of semantic configurations of two different kinds: register and cohesion.⁸ Coherence in this case means that each paragraph and sentences connects together. They must be tied to the one before and after it.
- 4. Unity in essay involves two related but distinct concepts: coherence and flow.

 Unity means developing one single main idea. The students' writing should be able to compose clear ideas and give logical evidence. A paragraph and essay should discuss only one topic.

 $^7\ https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/685/05/ retrieved on June 20, 2015$

⁸ Halliday, M., & Hasan, R. *Language, context, and text: Aspects of language in a social semiotic perspective.* (Deakin: Deakin University, 1985), p.29

⁹ Thomas S. Kane, *Essential Guide to writing*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). p. 95