

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses about the background of the study, problem of the study, objectives of the study, significance of the study, hypothesis, limitation of the study, the operational definition of key terms, and framework of discussion as the following explanation.

A. Background of the Study

Language plays an important role in human life. People learn and use language as a means of communication, and simultaneously as social symbol of humanity. Moreover he or she stated that by using language someone could make statements, convey facts and knowledge, explain or report something, and keep social relations among the language users. These indicate that by using of language, people can express their ideas, feeling, information through communication.¹ Thus, Brown defines that language is a system of arbitrary conventionalized vocal or gesture symbol that enables members of a given community to communicate intelligibly with one another.² In this case, the wide used language in the world is English.

As one of language in the world, English is considered and applied as international language. It has been spoken and learnt by almost people in the world.

¹Jamansah “English Speech: the importance of mastering English”. (Taken from), <http://mgmp2008.wordpress.com/2008/11/10/english-speech-the-importance-of-masteringenglish> (online on April 14, 2013).

²Douglas Brown, 2000, *Language Learning and Teaching Fourth Edition*, New York: Longman, p.5.

There are some reasons why English is important and many people attempt to learn it. They are for finding job, traveling, interacting one each other, doing business, taking examination, doing research, writing in the foreign language, etc. So this way, there are many people learn English as second or foreign language.

As we know, there are so many vocabularies in English. One word can give different meaning depend on the context. In edition, one steam can be manipulated by adding prefix or suffix. There are additions which change the class of word, such as *beauty* (as a noun). If we add beauty by *-full*, it become an adjective (*beautiful*). These word construction are discussed in morphology. It is in line with Stork and Widowson's statement, morphology is concerned with the way in which words and meaningful elements are constructed and with how their function within the grammatical system of a language.³

In learning process, one of strategies that used to understand the meaning of unfamiliar word is morphological awareness. Morphological awareness is defined as the awareness of and access to the meaning and structure of morphemes in relation to word.⁴ For example, students were able to learn new words by generalizing from

³FC Stork and JDA Widowson, 1983, *Learning about Linguistics*, London : Hutchinson Publishing Group, p. 17.

⁴Catherine mcbride-chang, Richard k. Wagner and Andrea Muse, Bonnie w.-y. Chow, Hua Shu., 2005, "The Role of Morphological Awareness in Children's Vocabulary Acquisition in English", *Journal*, New York: Cambridge University Press, p.317. (taken from) http://www.psy.cuhk.edu.hk/psy_media/Cammie_files/061.the%20role%20of%20morphological%20awareness%20in%20childrens%20vocabulary%20acquisition%20in%20english.pdf

those sharing a root morpheme.⁵ It means knowing of the word formation make student easier to get meaning of unfamiliar word. With morphological awareness, students able to learn morphemes and morphemic boundaries by disassembling complex words into meaningful parts (e.g. childhoods = child + hood+ s), learning the meanings of roots, affixes (child= baby, -hood=the state of being, -s= to indicate plural nouns), and reassembling the meaningful parts into new meaning, (motherhood, fatherhood, brotherhood). The practice of this disassembling-reassembling method is called *morphological analysis*.⁶ So, morphological awareness is defined as the ability to use the knowledge of word formation rule that can help the students to inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words.

There were many studies that discuss about the role of morphological awareness in other language skill or language component. For example, morphological awareness was correlated by vocabulary knowledge, vocabulary size, syntax, morphological complexity, literary, and reading. Some of the results have shown that morphological awareness has significance relationship to vocabulary knowledge or vocabulary size.

As we know, students need many vocabularies in writing. In the present study, it is interested in investigating the correlation of morphological awareness and writing ability especially focus on using correct vocabularies in the sentences. So, it

⁵Wysocki, K. & Jenkins, J.R. 1987. "Deriving Word Meanings Through Morphological Generalization", *Reading Research Quarterly*, Vol. 22, p. 70. (Taken from) www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/recordDetail?accno=EJ346903

⁶Arnoff, M., & Fudeman, K., 2005, *What is Morphology?*, Malden: Blackwell, p.20. (Taken from) <http://www.ucd.ie/artspgs/introling/Aronoffmorphology.pdf> (online on March 28, 2013).

would not investigate about other elements of writing such as punctuation, grammar, format, and organization. It is focused in correlating morphological awareness to writing ability because writing ability is one of important skill which draw another skill and language component mastery. Indeed, there were many students feel difficult in writing. They need large vocabulary knowledge. The students should to have many vocabularies in their mind.

In English Education Program, writing is one of the skill subjects that are learnt by the students in the second semester until sixth semester. It is qualified subject that is important for the students. So, it is interested in conducting the study at STAIN Palangka Raya especially on English Education Study Program (TBI) students. It chose STAIN Palangka Raya because study about morphological awareness and writing ability have not conducted yet at STAIN Palangka Raya. Then, chose TBI students of STAIN Palangka Raya which based on two reasons. The firstly, they learn English as foreign language. The second, based on interview with one of the lecturers of English Phonology and Morphology, TBI students especially sixth semester students have good morphological awareness when they are doing the morphological test. It is reflected by morphological tests scores. They seem have good understanding about the morphology. But, they have low morphological awareness in outside the test, for example when they are asked to translate or write the texts. They seem difficult to find the meaning of complex words.⁷ It is interesting fact because some previous studies have shown the role of morphology in other

⁷Interview with Hj. Apni Ranti, S.Pd., M.Hum. at Palangka Raya, March 20, 2013.

language skill or language component mastery such as in reading, vocabulary size, vocabulary knowledge, vocabulary acquisition, morphological complexity, syntax, and phonology. If morphological awareness has significant relationship to vocabulary size, it assumes that the students will be easy in writing because they have many vocabularies. In this case, it is focused in finding the evidences to answer what the correlation of morphological awareness and writing ability only. So this way, the current study is important to be conducted.

Based on the reason above, it is interested in conducting the research entitled;
THE CORRELATION BETWEEN MORPHOLOGICAL AWARENESS AND WRITING ABILITY OF ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM STUDENTS OF STAIN PALANGKA RAYA

B. Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study above, the formulated problem of the study is:

Is there any significant correlation between morphological awareness and writing ability of English Education Study Program (TBI) students of STAIN Palangka Raya ?

C. Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to investigate the correlation between morphological awareness and writing ability of English Education Study Program (TBI) students of STAIN Palangka Raya.

D. Significances of the Study

The study has two significances. The first, the research gave some useful information base on the real evidence about the correlation between morphological awareness and writing ability of English Education Study Program (TBI) students of STAIN Palangka Raya. So this way, the teachers can create the new learning strategy that emphasize at morphological awareness to develop students' writing ability .

Practically, the result of the present study can be useful information for future researcher who interest in researching about morphological awareness and writing ability in her/his study.

E. Hypothesis

A hypothesis is a tentative explanation of certain observed facts and it is formulated as a guide to further investigation in other words.⁸ It helps the research limit investigation. Before going to conduct the study, it formulated hypothesis. Predetermined hypothesis is tentative proposition suggested as a solution to a problem. It used the hypothesis based on the problem of the study as follow:

H_a : There is positive correlation between morphological awareness and writing ability of TBI students of STAIN Palangka Raya.

H_o : There is negative correlation between morphological awareness and writing ability of TBI students of STAIN Palangka Raya.

⁸E.J. Brill in Farisi, 2008, "Morphological Awareness and its Relationship to Vocabulary Knowledge and Morphological Complexity among Omani EFL University Students", *Thesis*, Queensland: The University of Queensland. (Take from) <http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/Thesis/Thesis-Al-Farsi.pdf> (online on October 15, 2012).

F. Limitation of the Study

Based on the description above, it only discussed about the correlation between morphological awareness and writing ability. Therefore, it gave tests to the students about morphological awareness and writing. Morphological awareness test is used to measure students' ability to analyze and break word down into smallest meaningful components. The tests cover compound and complex morphemes that were analyzed by students. Those words consisted of inflectional and derivational morphemes. Meanwhile, writing ability test was used to measure the students' ability in writing. In the present study, it made limitation of writing ability. This study did not want to investigate about organization, punctuation, and format of the text in writing, but only focus on vocabulary especially in using correct vocabulary in the text. For example, he writes; "A difficult problem that is facing society is the *legal* of euthanasia". In this sentence, the students should write *legalization*, not legal. In this case, it chose an argumentative essay for the writing test because sixth semester students often write argumentative essay because learn about how to make thesis proposal. Indeed, argumentative essay uses many morphological forms in the sentences.

This study was conducted on sixth semester TBI students of STAIN Palangka Raya because the students have learnt about morphology. This material was discussed at sixth semester. Then, sixth semester TBI students have taken Writing I until Writing IV subjects. As the result, it is assumed that the students have adequate

knowledge about writing. Both of the score was calculated and would found the answer of research problem by analysis the data.

H. Operational Definition of Key Term

An operational definition is a definition that the specifies procedure or operation to be followed in producing or measuring a concept.⁹ Operational definition may not be a rich as constitutive definitions but are essential in research because investigator must collect data in terms of observable events. So this way, it formulated some operatioal definition of this study to avoid misunderstanding;

1. Correlation

Correlation means a connection between two things in which one thing changes as the other does. In other words, Ary et. al stated that 'correlation' is concerned with determining the extend of interrelation between two or more variables. In this case, it investigated the interrelation between two variables, they were morphological awareness and writing ability of TBI students of STAIN Palangka Raya.

2. Morphological awareness

Morphological awareness refers to the learners' conscious awareness of morphemes and morphemic structure, allowing them to reflect and manipulate morphological structure of words. In is case, morphological awareness is operationalized through students' scores of morphological awareness test.

⁹Donald Ary, et al., 2010, *Introduction to Research in Education (Eight Edition)*, Ottawa : Wadsworth Cengage learning, p.646.

3. Writing ability

Brown stated that writing is a way to end up thinking something you could not have started out thinking.¹⁰ Writing is a series of related text-making activities: generating, arranging and developing idea in sentences: drafting, shaping, rereading the text, editing and revising.¹¹ The concept of ability refers to a general trait of an individual that may facilitate the learning of a variety of specific skills.¹² Ability is the executive branch of competence, so to speak, and enables us to achieve meaning by putting our knowledge to work.¹³ Based on some definitions above, it can be understood that writing ability is the power or skill to do writing and it can be gotten and mastered by practicing. In the present study, writing ability is operationalized as students' score of writing test.

I. Framework of Discussion

The research is going to discuss five chapters as follows:

- Chapter I : Introduction covers background of the study, problem of the study, objective of the study, the significances of the study, hypothesis, the definition of key terms, and framework of discussion.
- Chapter II : Review of related literature covers previous studies, morphology that discuss about the nature of morphology, kind of morphemes, regular and irregular inflection, derivation, the Indonesian language

¹⁰Douglas Brown, 2000, *Teaching by Principles*, San Francisco : Logman, p. 335.

¹¹Regina L. Smalley and Marry K. Ruetten, 2001, *Refining composition Skill Rhetoric and Grammar* (five edition), Boston: HH Heinie and Heinle, p.13.

¹²David L. Sills, 1972, *Internal Encyclopedia the Social Science*, New York: The Macmillan Company and the Free Press, p. 38.

¹³H.G. Widdowson, 1996, *Linguistics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.28.

morphology, morphological awareness, cross-linguistic influence in studies on second language acquisition, and writing ability that discuss about the nature of writing ability and type of writing.

Chapter III : The research method covers research type and approach of the study, population and sample, the place and time of the study, research instrument, data collecting procedures, normal distribution and linear test, and data analysis procedures.

Chapter IV : The result of the study covers the students' morphological awareness, students' ability in writing, the correlation between students' morphological awareness and writing ability of the sixth semester students at STAIN Palangka Raya and discussion.

Chapter V : Conclusion and suggestion.