

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research foundation including background of the study, research focus, The research problem, objective of study, definitions of key terms, theoretical framework, and significance of the study in this research are provided in this chapter.

A. Background of Study

Language is not only the principal medium that human beings used to communicate with each other but also the bond that links people together and binds them to their culture. To understand our humanity, therefore, we must understand the language that made us human.¹

English is one of the International languages, and spoken by many people in the world. English is also the most famous and important language in the world, since there are many scientific books printed in English, and English is also used in formal or non formal communication in the world. As an international language, English is used by many communities in many countries in this world. It plays an important role in every aspect of human life, such as communication, economics, education, science, and technology. In many branches of knowledge, the English books are their main sources, such as Mathematics, Biology, Sociology, Law, Chemistry, Medical, Engineering, and many others. Lately, English is also spoken in formal or in non formal

¹ Virginia, *Language Introductory Readings*, New York: ST. Martin's Press, 1981, p. 1.

meetings in the world, and in Indonesia as well. There are many teaching learning processes are conducted in English, especially in the English department of Universities, English course institutions, discussions, seminars, and so on.

Writing is a series of related text-making activities: generating, arranging, and developing ideas in sentences: drafting, shaping, rereading the text, editing and revising.² There are different types of writing; According to Ngabut, one of the types of writing is description, which tells how something looks, or feels or sounds. It talks about such features as size, shape, colour, sound or taste. Recount is a text that telling the reader about one story, action, and activity.³ Exposition is writing that explains something. It often answers the questions what, how, and why. Its purpose is to present ideas as clear as possible. Narration is tells “what happen”. It tells a story. It is the kind of writing that find in novels, short stories, and biographies.⁴ Here is an example of descriptive text:

My name's Fadli. I don't have brothers and sisters. I'm the only child in my family. My family is harmonious. We love each other. My father's name is Rahman and my mother is Rahmah. My father is 60 years old and my mother is 55. They work as shopkeepers.

²Regina L. Smalley and Mary K. Ruetten, *Refining Composition Skill Rhetoric and Grammar, Fifth Edition, United States of America*: Heinle and Heinle, a Division of Thomson Learning, Inc, 2001,p.13.

³Artono Wardiman, *English in Focus 1 for Junior High School Students Year VIII*, Department National Education, Jakarta, p.61.

⁴C. Yus Ngabut, *Paragraph development*, Publisher AP Asri Press, Sidoarjo, 2006, p.1.

We live **in** a small village in Bondowoso. The name of my village is Jurangsapi. It's around 10 km from the **center** of town. Our house is big enough. There are 3 livingrooms, 4 bedrooms, a diningroom, a kitchen, musollah, a bedroom and toilet. **Behind** the kitchen there is a shelter. My father keeps many chicken there. I often help him feeding the chicken.

Writing descriptive is one of the fundamental functions of any language system and one of the first skills emergent language-users learn to control. Description enables the categorization or classification of an almost infinite range of experiences, observations, interactions into a system that orders them for immediate and future reference, and allows us to know them either objectively or subjectively, depending on the learning area or the intent of the writer. Describing is also used extensively in many text types, such as information report, literacy descriptions, and descriptive recounts, and descriptive recounts, due to the need to classify and/ or describe process before explaining it, in the opening paragraph of the most explanations.

Describing is also a central feature of narrative texts providing the means for developing characterization, sense of place and key themes.⁵ It is taught by teacher in order to make students know how to describe themselves and their surrounding although it is in a simple way. However, many students have difficulties in writing descriptive text because the teacher only explains what the generic structure and method how to write the descriptive text.

⁵Peter Knapp and Megan Watkins, *Genre, Text, Grammar Technologies for Teaching and Assesing Writing*, Australia: University of New South Wales Press, 2005, p. 97

Therefore, the students will be unmotivated, bored, and have difficulties in learning descriptive text. They also do not be able to recall and to describe the things in systematic order. Moreover, they cannot describe the parts, qualities, and characteristics of the things completely.⁶

Transitional are connective words and phrases that show the relationship between ideas in the same sentences, between ideas in different sentences and between ideas in different paragraph.⁷There are eleven groups of transition in English they are; to show time; addition, contrast, comparison/similarity, concession, demonstrate/illustration, sequence/order, cause and effect, purpose, location/place, conclusion/summary. Transition occur not only within the supporting paragraph in an essay, but also between the paragraph. They are used to help tie together the supporting paragraph in an essay.

The transitional signal mastery is the urgent part for the students who want to have a good skill in English. The functions of transitional signals are shown in Table 1.1.⁸

⁶Widodo Hami, *Improving Students' Ability in Writing Descriptive Text Through Wholesome Scattering Game (A Classroom Action Research with the 8th Grade Students of MTs Sunan Ampel Patean Kendal in Academic Years of 2010/2011)*, unpublished thesis: Wali Songo State Institute for Islamic Studies, 2011.

⁷Sabarun, *the transitional signals Materials for Writing IV*, Palangka Raya, p. 1.

⁸Roald Dahl, *Transition Unit of Work Based on the Twits*, The Literacy Team: HIAS (transition-unit-year3-year4.pdf). Accessed on July 12, 2015

Table 1.1

The functions of transitional signals

How they are used	Examples
To add another thought	Two postal cards are often more effective than one letter. <i>Besides</i> , they are cheaper.
To add an example	He has lost confidence in his game. <i>For example</i> , yesterday he got nervous at the end of the match.
To add emphasis to an idea	Last week I was ill. <i>In fact</i> , I had to stay in bed until Monday.
To highlight what follows	The President vetoed the bill. <i>Consequently</i> , it never became a law
To grant an exception	He said he would study all day. I doubt it, <i>through</i>
To arrange ideas in order, time, or space	<i>First</i> , drink some fruit juice. <i>Next</i> have a bowl of soup, three ear the quiche. Finally, have some pie and coffe.
To sum up several ideas	Scientists say that we should eat food that has all the proteins, fats, and vitamins we need. <i>In short</i> , they recommended a balanced diet.

In fact, most of students are difficult to compose the story into some paragraphs with the chronological sequences. They always get confused and stuck for the next story idea after writing the first paragraph as the opening of story. To solve the students' writing problem and make them become goodwriters, the writer would like to conduct about the use of transitional signals in writing order to make the students more easy and interest to making some paragraphs especially in writing descriptive text.

Based on to the fact from pre observation in the school, most of the students of MTs MUSLIMMAT NU Palangka Raya still get difficulties in writing skill and developing their English ability, especially the eighth grade students when they are following the materials of English in junior high school and when the students might not be able to understand the materials explained by the teacher, especially in writing ability. By mastering the kinds of transitional signals well, the students will be able to write the English well.

However, writing is not an easy matter for young learners, including junior high school students. They are usually nervous and panic when they are asked by the teacher to write some paragraphs in English. Most of them have limited vocabularies, especially new vocabularies, diction, and idiom. Then, they fear to write it, because doubtful with the punctuation. In addition, they also have difficulties in grammar.

Based on the explanation above, the writer would like to conduct the study with the title **The Use of Transitional Signals in Descriptive Text Written By Eighth-Grade Students of MTs Muslimat NU Palangka Raya.**

B. Research Focus

To make the problem easy to be discussed deeply, the writer focuses the research as follows :

1. The subject of researcher in this research is the eighth grade of MTs Muslimat NU Palangka Raya.
2. The object of researcher in this research is the use of transitional signals in sentence of paragraph at the eighth grade of MTs Muslimat NU Palangka Raya.
3. The assessment on student's writing descriptive paragraph, in this study, it focused on the components of writing : content, organization, vocabulary and language use.

C. Problem of the study

1. How well do the students write descriptive text at the eighth grade of MTs Muslimat NU Palangka Raya?
2. How well do the students use transitional signals in writing descriptive text at the eighth grade of MTs Muslimat NU Palangka Raya?
3. What are the problems faced by the students in study using transitional signals in writing descriptive text at the eighth grade of MTs Muslimat NU Palangka Raya?

D. Limitation of The Study

The problem of this research is limited on the use of transitional signals in writing descriptive text written by the eighth grade of MTs Muslimat NU Palangka Raya.

E. Objective of The Study

This research is aimed at finding out :

1. To described how well the students write descriptive text at the eighth grade of MTs Muslimat NU Palangka Raya.
2. To described how well the students use transitional signals in writing descriptive text at the eighth grade of MTs Muslimat NU Palangka Raya.
3. To described problems faced by the students in using transitional signals in writing descriptive text at the eighth grade of MTs Muslimat NU Palangka Raya.

F. The Definitions of Key Terms

1. Transitional signals

Transitional are connective words and phrases that show the relationship between ideas in the same sentences, between ideas in different sentences and between ideas in different paragraph.⁹

2. Descriptive

Description, which tells how something looks, or feels or sounds. It talks about such features as size, shape, colour, sound or taste. Recount is a text that telling the reader about one story, action, and activity.¹⁰

⁹Sabarun, *the transitional signals Materials for Writing IV*, Palangka Raya, p. 1.

3. Writing

Writing is a series of related text-making activities: generating, arranging, and developing ideas in sentences: drafting, shaping, rereading the text, editing and revising.¹¹

G. Theoretical Framework

This paper will be presented in two chapters. The chapter will consist of several sub topics that will elaborate the different issues.

- Chapter I : Introduction. It consist of background, research focus, research problem, objective of study, definitions of key terms, theorethical framework, and significance of the study.
- Chapter II : Review of related literature consist of previous studies, nature of writing, Definition, generic structure and language features of descriptive, transitional signals, writing assessment, scoring guide for writing paragraph.
- Chapter III : Research methods consist of time and place of the study, approach and type of the study, population and sample of the study, source of data, data collecting procedure, instrument of the study, instrumentation validity, instrument reliability and data analysis procedures.

¹⁰Artono Wardiman, *English in Focus 1 for Junior High School Students Year VIII*, Department National Education, Jakarta, p.61.

¹¹Regina L. Smalley and Mary K. Ruetten, *Refining Composition Skill Rhetoric and Grammar, Fifth Edition, United States of America*: Heinle and Heinle, a Devision of Thomson Learning, Inc, 2001,p.13.

Chapter IV : In this chapter presented the data which had been collected from the research. The important point of this chapter is to answer the problems of the study. based on the problems of the study, the study aimed at describing the students' ability in writing descriptive text of the eighth grade students at MTs Muslimat NU Palangka Raya. The uses of transitional signals in writing descriptive text and problems faced by the students in using transitional signals in descriptive text.

Chapter V : In this chapter the writer presented the conclusion and suggestion. The important point of this chapter is the answer of problems of the study. Based on the problems of the study, the study is aimed at describing how well the students write descriptive text, how well the students use transitional signals in writing descriptive text and the students problems faced by the students used transitional signals in writing descriptive text.

H. Significance of the Study

Theoretically :

1. The result of this study is expected to be able to widen the skill of the student in writing by using transitional signals.
2. As a reference to other researchers who want to study the use of transitional signals in sentence of paragraph.

Practically :

1. The result of this study highlights the use of transitional in sentence of paragraph at the eighth grade of MTs Muslimat NU Palangka Raya.
2. This study is hopefully able to present a fact of the use transitional signals in sentence of paragraph at writing class at the eighth grade of MTs Muslimat NU Palangka Raya.