

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of study

There are many languages in the world. One of them is English. Today, in many parts of the world, English is used as a second language. Even, it is said as the international language because there are so many countries use English for being their second language in their daily communication. According to Pyles and Algeo (1982, cited in Norwahyuni 2011, p. 1), they define that” The language as the system of conventional vocal sign by means of which human being communicate. Either it is spoken or written, it is used by the people to communicate each other”. It means that language is a medium for human in communicating each other using certain sign which is understood by others entirely. Then, it shows that language is fundamentally part in the daily communication for human.

Learning a second language or a foreign language is a big challenge for Indonesian students. It is also for English. Many students think that English has complex skills with many rules and vocabulary which they feel too difficult to conquer it. Although it is hard but English has important role in education because English as one of the subject that has to learn and pass at the national exam. Students are asked to reach the certain score for passing the examination.

Then, English is also taught in every levels of education beginning from elementary school, junior high school, senior high school until university. So, the Indonesian student is necessity to master English as the school requirement and completing their language ability.

English as the language is learned by human in two forms. The first is in spoken form and the second is written form. Both of them has same purposes. That is for communicating and exchanging the ideas to each other. In expressing the idea, people share their own abilities. There is a person who is better and confident in expressing his way of thinking in spoken language. Meanwhile, there is also a person who is weak in spoken but well enough in his or her written form. Lado states that “Learning to write a foreign language is learning to put down the graphic symbol that represent a language one understand and the people can read the language through graphic symbol” (1964, p. 23). That explanation also gives the evidence that writing is the other way to express human’s feeling, experience, idea and others besides orally. It uses the certain symbol that can be understood by others.

Through writing the learners can improve their ability in imagining something to be their inspiration and changes it into the great word and sentences composition that can read by any other people. From writing, they can tell about many experiences that they cannot produce orally. According to Brown “Writing is representation of spoken language and written language is almost the same with

spoken language” (2001, p. 335). The difference is that the performance of written language convey graphically. It means that writing as a representation of language has the same purpose with speaking, that is for communicating. But if in spoken it produces the sound, meanwhile writing produces a sign using pen and paper.

Writing is one of the productive skill where students should produce their ideas, thoughts, and emotion in written form. Zhang F. Xin (2001, cited in Ningsih, 2004, p. 3) states that “Writing is a complex skills; it embraces structure, vocabulary, rhetoric concepts and other element. This skill relates with listening, speaking, and reading”. A good ability in writing means having a good ability in vocabulary, grammar, spelling and punctuation besides the organization of writing. It is supported by Celce Murcia statement. She argues that ”The most important is present a product which does not suffer from unintelligible handwriting, numerous of spelling errors, faulty punctuation or inaccurate structure, any of which may render the message unintelligible” (2001, p. 207). So, writing is a complete skill that contains many sub skills inside and for reaching good writing writer should pay attention to the structure, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation to build the writer ideas with the message.

Puspitasari (2013) in her study also states that there are several aspects that affect student’s writing because writing requires a set of complex skills. First, the students need to be able to spell English words and master English grammar

and punctuation rules. They also need to be able to construct the words into sentences and arranges the sentences into good arrangements and coherent paragraphs. Then, the careless of students to their writing. It is known from many student do not re-read the text that they have just written. They do not revise their writing products. When they do not respond and revise the text, they will not find out the errors and illogical sequences in their paragraphs. As the result, they cannot improve the quality of their texts (p. 3). Her statement shows that behind the great writing, it contains many struggle from the writer through some of complex process of writing to produce the great outcomes.

Unfortunately, learning a second language is not as easy as learning the first language or mother tongue. According to Ningsih (2004) in her study, the purpose of the writing itself is the expression of ideas to the readers. So, the ideas should be seen as the most important aspect in writing. On the other hand, the writer also needs pay attention to a formal aspect such as: neat, handwriting, correct spelling, punctuation as well as acceptable grammar and careful selection of vocabulary (p. 3). From four macro skills, writing is the most difficult one for all language users whether the language is the first, second or foreign language. It is because writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity. It is suitable with Richards and Renandya statement. They state that writing is the most difficult skill for second language learners to master. The skills involved in writing are highly complex (2002, p. 303). Meanwhile Nunan, (1991, cited in Puspitasari,

2013, p. 2) reveals that writing is commonly a difficult activity for most people, both in mother tongue and in foreign language. It is because the writing skill requires capabilities more than other language skills and it needs a special preparation. Therefore, it is acceptable that students often made errors or mistakes in writing and it produces low quality of writing product because in writing a writer should pay attention to many aspects of writing.

From the all of statements above, good writing cannot come in a minute, but it can get from many times of writing exercises. The writer builds his writing ability from his errors in writing. After someone did it, he can detect about the errors and corrects it into accepted words, sentences or paragraph. Repairing about the errors also explains in Holy Quran that is implied in An-Nahl verse 119 as follow:

ثُمَّ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ لِلَّذِينَ عَمِلُوا السُّوءَ بِجَهْلَةٍ ثُمَّ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ

وَأَصْلَحُوا إِنَّ رَبَّكَ مِنْ بَعْدِهَا لَغَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١١٩﴾

This verse explains that God will forgive human who did mistake so long as they learn from their mistake, corrects it and promises to avoid it repeated. This verse gives evidence that everyone should learn from their mistakes and it is not only in the daily life but also in other activities in learning like writing.

According to Husna (2012) in her research, writing like any other skill has its 'mechanical' components. These include handwriting, spelling, punctuation and the construction of well-formed sentences (p. 24). Written words, sentences, paragraphs, or texts in English have very close relationship with vocabulary where they have been constructed by many collaboration of vocabulary. Besides, the vocabulary has the particular message if it writes in correct spelling. English as a second language provides many vocabularies with similar spelling. English learners are not only learning the vocabulary but also the spelling, because the meaning can change directly because of spelling errors. Wishon and Burks argue, to build a composition, writer needs to build it with several paragraph which is usually constructed by a series of sentences that develops one topic (1980, p. 369). Then, for making sentences writer should know about English words and how to write it with correct letter. It is intended that spelling is the basic unit of constructing writing. It concludes that errors in spelling can decrease the quality of writing.

The impact of spelling error in writing gives some information to reader about the writer ability. First, the students do not know how to spell the English words accurately. Second, students have lack of vocabulary. Then, the third students also have lack of pronunciation simultaneously.

Based on the pre-observation during Teaching Practice II at one of senior high school in Banjarmasin. The researcher found that many spelling errors in

their handwriting either English words or sentences which the error includes a variety categories. It gave researcher idea to know English spelling ability for the early students at junior high school.

The study about spelling errors analysis has already done by some researchers. The first study entitled “Spelling Error Analysis in College English Writing”. It was conducted by Yanyan Liu from Qingdao University of Science and Technology, China, 2015. In her research, she found that the spelling errors still exist at the college especially in syntactic and semantic. The second research was investigated by Ardianto Seno in 2009. A student from Gunadarma University. His study entitled “An Error Analysis in English Spelling”. His research used the qualitative method and found the arbitrary as the most dominant errors in students writing. The last, it is from Subhi and Yasin, their research has title” Investigating Study of an English Spelling Error: A sample of Iraqi Students in Malaysia. They found that Iraqi students still did errors in their writing task. In this research, they used Cook spelling errors category and essay as the test. The similarity of previous study with writer research is investigating in a same problem. That is spelling error. But, they have the difference subject research and kind of writing as the test.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested to analyse the spelling errors in students’ writings at second grade junior high school. Second grade students are chosen by the researcher based on the consideration that they

have enough vocabulary for writing and they are still in early phase to learn English. So it is appropriate with the researcher's purpose to find out the spelling ability in writing for early students.

The writer chooses spelling errors because it is one of the considerations for determining the quality of overall writing activities. The study of learner's spelling errors provides an opportunity to understand and facilitate in the learner's spelling difficulties. Then, SMPN 2 Aluh-Aluh is chosen by researcher because it is the only one of the junior high school at Beruntung Baru subdistrict, so she wants to know the students English skill at that school especially their spelling.

All of reason above explains that the researcher wants to conduct her research entitled **"Spelling Errors in Students' Writings "**.

B. Problem Statement

The purpose of this study is to answer some of research question as follow:

1. What are the spelling errors in students' writings?
2. What is the most common spelling errors category in students' writings?

C. Objective of Research

1. To identify the spelling errors in students' writings
2. To identify the most common students spelling errors in writing

D. Problem Limitation

Spelling errors can emerge in many areas of writing. According to Cook (1990), he concludes that English spelling error can be classified into 4 main type categories; namely omission, insertion, substitution, and transposition. Meanwhile, according to Kukich (as cited in Yanyan Liu, 2015, p. 1629), he argues that spelling error can be divided into 2 parts; typographic errors and cognitive errors. Therefore, the researcher conducts this research in particular spelling error limitation and she uses the Cook's classification to analyze the spelling errors.

E. Significant of Study

The result of this study is expected to give some positive outcomes as follow :

1. For Students

It can be useful for students to help them measure their spelling and vocabulary mastery. Then, it can provide more information about spelling errors and also shows the common errors in writing. It can make students aware and improve their ability in writing.

2. For Teacher

By doing this research, the researcher hopes that the result of the study can be useful to give contribution of developing English teaching writing, especially in spelling. Moreover, the researcher hopes that teacher can establish the teaching and learning activity with interesting media and variety of exercise form to make students enthusiasm and gets better achievement. By analyzing students' errors, teachers can examine the most common errors in students writing and decides the ways to treat and decreases the errors.

3. For Another Researcher

The researcher hopes this research can be source or comparison for another researcher that wants to take investigation in a same field and also it can be the inspiration to look for other problem in spelling deeply.

F. Definition of Key Term

In order to clarify what are the variables that involves in this study, the researcher gives some definition as follow :

1. Spelling

Spelling is all of letters that arranged using correct order to be words and it has certain message to reader.

2. Writing

Writing is an idea, expression and emotion in someone's mind then it is expressing in particular combination of letters somehow it builds the written composition that can be read by other people.

3. Error

Error is unacceptable or inappropriate of language with the rules or writing system.