

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Language plays an important role in human life. Language is considered to be a system of communication with other people using sounds, symbols and words in expressing meanings, ideas or thoughts. Language has been used by humans as a tool of communication since they were born. Babies use the language by crying. It is characterized by a crying when the baby is hungry or sleepy. Crying is used as a tool of communication with people around him to convey the desires and his thoughts. Language is used to show their thoughts and feelings, wishes and activities and to influence others. Marry Finocchiaro (1975, p. 2) states that one's educational background, association, tradition and sign of family and nation can be explained by a language.

Murcia and Lois in their book *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*, stated that the essence of language in human activity on the part of one individual is to make him understood by another, and the activity on the part of the other to understand what was the main of the first (Murcia and Lois Menthos, 1959, p. 183).

Language is a necessity to human life, and civilization is certainly not possible without it. All sciences depend upon it and also all education in human life is conducted through it. People around the world use it as a gift from God to

human being as adjusted to one of the Holy Koran in Surah al-Hujurat verse 13 as follows:



Nowadays, English language has become the popular language which is learnt by most people in many areas of the world. English is an international language. It is the world's most widely used language by society for communication and international contact.

In this globalization era, everyone is demanded to prepare a great resources for their life particularly in science and technology. Of course, to compete against a global demanding, the people should have an adequate knowledge and good skills. Therefore, mastering English language both oral and written English actively is a necessity for academic and global media communication requirement because it has become compulsory for everyone who wants to compete against the globalization era.

In Indonesia, English is acknowledged as a foreign language. It becomes an

obligated subject that must be learnt by students from elementary school level up to university level. In English study, students will learn language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

Writing is an important aspect of one of the school curriculum and it accounts for a significant part of the examination syllabus. The English examination syllabus usually focuses on continuous writing and students are required to be familiar with issues such as letter writing, articles, speeches, and essays, all of which involve specific formats and procedures that are worthy of attention if success is to be guaranteed.

There is no doubt that English writing is important as the other three-language skills. The ability to write is frequently demanded in many occasions in our life. For many reasons, writing skill is crucial to most people. Writing is crucial meaning of human communication. It is used to communicate with other people in society and to express our feelings and opinions.

Writing is one of the productive skills besides speaking. It is the art of conveying language to other on written way. It is the basic difference between writing and speaking as productive activity. Writing is also a kind of accuracy activity. One theory is given by Penny Ur (1996) who indicates that writing concentrates on the message, paper, communicating, and receiving content.

Heaton in Noni (1984, p. 126) states that many students still encounter difficulties in writing because it is complex and difficult. In studying English, many students who study in the tertiary level still often make errors in writing though they

have learned it for many times, even years.

Transition signals are useful devices, but they are not the only way to make writing flow and often they are the least sophisticated way to do so. Transitions enable the readers' thinking to follow along with the writer's intention. At times, readers may argue with a narrative because the writer has not drawn a sufficient connection between ideas. When good transition signals are missing, the reader may need to stop, question the meaning, and reread a section. George & Julia (1980, p. 184) state that the use of those connections is essential to smooth paragraph development.

Transition signals are needed for three reasons. First, transition signals make it easy for the reader to follow ideas. Second, they are like a road map for the reader, telling them how ideas are related. The last, it helps the reader to know when giving a similar idea, an opposite idea, an example, or conclusion.

Writing paragraph is a skill taught since junior high school to university level. In Senior high school there are some topics about text, for examples: narrative text, recount text, argumentative text, etc. Sometimes the students are asked to make a paragraph text by the teacher. They feel difficult to make a good paragraph. One of the reasons is because the students cannot use transition signal as sentence connector in paragraph writing well. Students are still low in organizing information to write text accurately and use transition signals correctly. So, their writing is difficult to understand.

MAN Selat Tengah is one of the government schools in Kapuas that puts

English as a compulsory subject in teaching and learning process. The students are expected to have a good performance of English skill properly for each level of education. In this research, the researcher wants to know how far the mastery of the students in writing skill, especially in using transition signals as sentence connectors in paragraph.

Based on the explanation above the writer is interested in conducted a research at MAN Selat Tengah Kapuas regency. The writer carries out the research entitled **“THE ELEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS’ MASTERY IN USING TRANSITION SIGNALS AS SENTENCE CONNECTORS IN PARAGRAPH AT MAN SELAT KAPUAS REGENCY ACADEMIC YEAR 2012/2013”**

B. Statements of Problems

Based on the background above, the writer investigates and focuses on the following questions:

1. How is the eleventh grade students’ mastery in using transition signals as sentence connectors in paragraph at MAN Selat Kapuas regency academic year 2012/2013?
2. What is the students’ most common error in using transition signals as sentence connectors in paragraph at MAN Selat Kapuas regency academic year 2012/2013?

C. Objectives of Study

The objectives of the research are:

1. To know the eleventh grade students' mastery in using transition signals as sentence connectors in paragraph at MAN Selat Kapuas regency academic year 2012/2013.
2. To know the eleventh grade students' most common error in using transition signals as sentence connectors in paragraph at MAN Selat Kapuas regency academic year 2012/2013.

D. Significance of Study

The research has the following significance:

1. Give information for English teachers who want to know about students' mastery and common errors in using transition signals as sentence connectors in paragraph.
2. Give benefits for English teachers to teach writing English skill better.
3. Give information, consideration and input for the students especially for improving the use of transition signals as sentence connectors in paragraph.

4. Enriching the writers' knowledge about transition signals as sentence connectors in paragraph.
5. Add the literary source in the library of IAIN Antasari Banjarmasin.

E. Definition of Key Terms

There are some terms which are used in this research. In order to avoid misunderstanding of them, some key terms are defined as follows:

1. **Mastery** : Mastery is the great skill/knowledge (Bull, 2010, p. 271). Mastery is to gain complete knowledge or skill in something. To gain control of something, able to control other; dominating, very skillful, great skill (Evison, 2005, p. 721). According to *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* "Mastery" (*menguasai*) *adalah proses cara perbuatan menguasai dan mengusahakan; pemahaman atau kesanggupan untuk menggunakan (pengetahuan, kepandaian)*". Mastery means the ability in using transition signals as sentence connectors in paragraph which is taught at the eleventh grade of MAN Selat Tengah Kapuas regency academic year 2012/2013.
2. **Transition Signal** : Connecting words or phrases that act like bridge between parts of writing. They link sentences and paragraph together smoothly so that there are no abrupt jumps or breaks between ideas (Oshima & Hogue, 1991)

3. Sentence connector : A word or phrase that introduces a clause or sentence and serves as a transition between it and a previous clause or sentence (Alexander, 2000). It Shows relationships between ideas in different sentences in paragraph.
4. Paragraph : A group of sentences which develop one central idea (Martin & Mary, 1990, p. 1)
5. MAN Selat : It is a State Islamic Senior High school which located in Kapuas regency and as place for this research.

Thus, the title of this study refers to studying the mastery of the eleventh grade students at MAN Selat Tengah in using transition signals as sentence connectors that show relationship among sentences in paragraph and the common errors in using these connections.