

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In writing, we need our own thoughts- a kind of analyzing and assessing, a resolving of differences, and a final structuring. Writing permits us not just to say what we have to say, but to see what we have to say. The way something is expressed in writing is consistently important; writing increases the need for choices. We need more words to select from, more combinations, more structures, and more strategies. Writing is a greater challenge to the imagination than talking. Writing requires a mature ability to use language. It can act as a positive influence upon the creative powers of the individual. In fact, many people first discover their full capacities for expression by meeting the challenges of writing (Irmscher, 1979:20).

As a means of communication, writing has one big advantage over speaking. It gives the writer time to think, try out his ideas on the paper, choose his words, read what he has written, rethink, revise, and rearrange his ideas, and most importantly, to consider his writing effects on his readers. Writing gives the writer time to find the best possible way of stating what he means (Heffernan and Lincoln, 1990:vii).

Despite that advantage, writing is a means of communication one must consciously learn. No one learns to write automatically. One fact that makes it hard to communicate through writing is that written words usually have to “speak” by themselves without the presence of the writer. In writing, the writer

has to communicate without facial expressions, gestures, or body language of any kind. He has to speak with words and punctuation alone (Heffernan and Lincoln, 1990:4).

Learning writing is like learning driving. When a person begins to learn how to drive an automobile, a driving instructor does not place the person on a busy street. Fortunately not many driving instructors turn their students loose on the highway with a minimal advice. Sometimes, it seems as if many students have been turned loose on paper with little more preparation than the poor-driving student has. If, as writers, students view only the perfection of the final written product and then set out to try their hands at writing, never understanding the process that led to the product, they may become discouraged and fail (Duke, 1993:v).

Everyone can write well but he has to organize his thinking in written work. Knowing how to express ideas in writing in an organized way is very important for everybody. There are six questions which help a writer organize his ideas as the basic steps of the writing process:

1. What is a composition?

A composition is a piece of writing about one central topic. It may consist of one or more paragraphs. If the central topic is broad and needs to be divided into several subtopics, each of these subtopics should be developed in at least one paragraph. A composition of more than one paragraph usually have an introduction and a conclusion that are separate paragraphs.

2. What is a paragraph?

A paragraph is a group of related sentences that communicates one central idea. A paragraph may be short or long according to the simplicity or complexity of the subject.

3. What does a paragraph look like?

The first line of a paragraph is indented in most kinds of writing. This means that a writer must leave an empty space to show the beginning of the paragraph. A composition that has one paragraph will have only one indentation. A composition that has two paragraphs will have two indentations, and so on. The capitalization at the first word in each sentence, a period (.) at the end of each sentence, question mark (?), or exclamation point (!) are very important in the paragraphs.

4. How does a paragraph begin?

It usually begins with general statement (general statement the main idea sentence/a topic sentence). The main idea sentence tells the reader what the paragraph is about and limits the kind of information that should be included in the paragraph. The main idea sentence is usually the first sentence of the paragraph, but experienced writers sometimes place it in the middle or at the end of the paragraph.

5. How does a paragraph progress?

Major points follow the main idea sentence. The major points are the sentences that explain the main idea sentence. They give information about it.

## 6. What holds a paragraph together?

Ideas in a paragraph are often connected with transition signals. Transition signals show the relationship between these ideas. Transition signals include words and phrases such as first, finally, in addition, for example, and in contrast. Without transition signals, the paragraph will not read smoothly.

Transitions are also used to connect paragraphs.

Those points can help a writer to organize his thinking as basic steps of writing process. Knowing to express ideas in writing in an organized way is important for everybody to make a good composition (Huizenga, Snellings and Francis, 1990:xv-xvii).

Besides those, a writer has to anticipate the reaction of a reader he can not see or hear. And one of the things he can do is to make his composition comprehensible in the sense that the composition is coherent clear and easy to follow. There are two main ways to achieve coherence. The first way is to use transition signals to show how one idea is related to the next. The second way to achieve coherence is to arrange the sentences in logical order. Readers will see easily the relationship between the parts. This sample paragraph taken from one of the paper being analyzed in “Handbook for Exposition” shows a composition with that quality (Dunbar and Dunbar, 1989:301):

The rooms in Whittier Hall, where I live, have the same basic shape, like shoe-boxes – long and narrow, with the door at one end and the window at the other.

Without the presence of the underlined word, the readers will have difficulty to see the relationship between the sentences; hence, they will also have difficulty to get the idea of the paragraph that the writer would like to express.

The decisions to use the transition signal word "*and*" shows that the writer wants to make an additional information which lists causes or other ideas in a composition. Thus, it can be said that the use of the right transition signals helps the readers connect the ideas presented and hence understand the composition. Judging from the fact that transition signals are important to make a composition coherent, the writer decided to focus her study on the transition signals used in the students' composition, especially those which show additional information.

The writer focused her study on the transition signals showing additional information because she noticed that some students of the English Department of Widya Mandala University usually chose and used only certain transition signals although these devices showing additional information vary largely. This indicates that there are "most-often-used" transition and there are also "rarely used" transition chosen to show additional information. The writer wants to confirm this notion.

The composition being analyzed as samples of this study were taken from some of the works of the fourth semester S-1 students of the English Department of Widya Mandala University Surabaya. The students were expected to produce expository compositions during the semester. One of this kind of composition can help the writer in conducting her study on transition signals showing additional information since in an expository composition, a writer has to tell things in which he will sometimes need the presence of transition signals. This is especially true when he uses the connections for adding one idea to another.

The writer realizes that there are other thesis previously written which also analyze students' compositions and cohesive devices. Although the topic is

similar, they focused on different things. Therefore, the writer encouraged herself to proceed with her study using those previous studies as references in conducting the present study. These previous studies will be discussed further in chapter II.

## **1.2 Statements of the Problem**

In accordance with the background of the study, the study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. How far have the English Department students of Widya Mandala University mastered the use of the transition signals showing additional information in their expository compositions?
2. Which transition signals showing additional information are most frequently used in the expository composition of the English Department students of Widya Mandala University?
3. Which transition signals showing additional information are least frequently used in the expository composition of the English Department students of Widya Mandala University?

## **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

Based on the statements of the problem mentioned above, this study was planned to:

1. Describe the mastery of transition signals showing additional information as they are used by the students of English Department of Widya Mandala University in their expository compositions.

2. List the transition signals showing additional information which are most frequently used in the expository composition of the English Department students of Widya Mandala University.
3. List the transition signals showing additional information which are least frequently used in the expository composition of the English Department students of Widya Mandala University.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The research findings reported in this thesis should give some contributions to the teaching –learning of composition at the English Department of Widya Mandala University, especially to lecturers of writing who would benefit from a guide in making use of the large variety of transition signals.

#### **1.5 Limitation of the Study**

This study was limited to the analysis of transition signals showing additional information, so not all types of transition signals were studied. The subjects of the study were limited to the fourth semester students of the English Department of Widya Mandala University Surabaya. The writer chose the fourth semester students here because she considers that they write expository compositions. The data sources were the expository composition papers of fifteen of the students mentioned above. The works being analyzed were again limited to one of their expository composition.



## 1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To make the discussion in the following chapters easier, below the writer provides the definitions of the key terms used in this thesis.

### 1. Transition signals:

According to Oshima and Hogue(1983:27), transition signals are words such as “*next*”, “*finally*”, “*therefore*”, and “*however*”, or phrases such as “*in conclusion*”, “*on the other hand*”, and “*as a result*”. Transition signals achieve coherence in writing and show how one idea is related to the next. Transition words give the paragraph coherence. Using transition words to guide the readers makes it easier to follow the writer’s ideas.

### 2. Transition signals showing additional information:

Oshima and Hogue(1983:29) state that the transition signals showing additional information are words which show how one idea is added to the next idea.

### 3. Conjunctions:

Fries (1973:206) says that a conjunction is often defined as “a word that joins together sentences or parts of a sentence.”

Neman (1989:494) claims that a conjunction is a part of speech that links words, phrases, or clauses to the other parts of the sentence and shows the relations between them.

### 4. Conjunctions showing additional information:

Based on the definition of conjunctions stated by Neman above, a conjunction showing additional information is a part of speech that links

words, phrases, or clauses to the other parts of the sentence and shows additional information.

5. Expository writing:

Expository writing is a kind of composition in which the writer tries to explain or make clear about something, someplace, or somebody by giving details. Exposition is the writer's attempt to develop a topic by providing specific details, examples, or logical reasoning to expand and clarify the idea (Dunbar and Dunbar, 1989:263).

## **1.7 Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction that deals with the background of the study, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, limitation of the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the thesis. Chapter II deals with the review of the related literature and previous studies that are relevant to this study. Chapter III presents the methodology of this study that consists of the nature of the study, the population and samples, the procedure of data collection, and the technique of data analysis. Chapter IV contains the data analysis and findings. The last, chapter V is the conclusion, which represents the summary and suggestions concerning this study.