

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Basic Consideration

One skill that the students use in their daily English is writing skill. This skill is a media for students to help them in conveying their idea and opinion. Furthermore, by writing, the students can exercise their ability in using written language.

As the language skill, it has a relationship to the process of thinking of expression idea and written form. In this process, one should organize the idea systematically or structurally, it is aimed at making the content of writing understood easily. This statement is supported by Akhadiah, et.al, (1988, p.2) stated that “Writing language is to organize the idea in a systematic manner and to expressed in written”. From this statement, it can be said that in writing, the students have to use a systematic and grammatical sentence.

From the statement above, the objective of writing is to write sentence or paragraph correctly in order to make the content of idea and opinion of the writing can be structurally conveyed, the writer must understand the rules of writing, so the reader will not be confused or misunderstand. One of writing that students learn in school is writing a letter. So, we must know the difficulties of students in using mechanics in writing a letter.

In curriculum of Junior High School, the students had learnt about letter. The students is taught how to write the letter, how to begin writing a letter, also the students is taught the component or the element of the letter both formal and

informal letter. Formal and informal letter have difference in structure, form, content and style of it. For example, formal letter has basic points namely the heading, name and address, salutation, body, and closing. This opinion supported by Khoo, Umar and Lim (2009, p.212) stated that “an informal letter has a definite format of address, solutation, introduction, body conclusion and ending with a signature”. Meanwhile, the structure of informal letter has basic points, such as opening (salutation), body (content) and closing. Here, the research only wants to know the students’ difficulties in writing informal letter by using mechanics. For example, they are making mistake in putting comma in separating sentence, *Andy uses the blue umbrella. It is used when rainy*. Of course this putting of comma is incorrect, it should uses comma to separate the sentence, the sentence *Andy is use the blue umbrella, and it is used when rainy*.

In this case, I chose the students of SMP 3 of Gorontalo City as the sample of research; it is chosen because the students have various ability in writing especially writing letter include writing informal letter. In fact, even though the students are learning letter but they have various abilities in writing informal letter, especially in using mechanics. It is because their writing to practices is less. The use of informal letter in this research because by writing informal letter the students can show their own idea, they can convey everything what they want to say based on the title chosen. In addition, the choosing of informal letter because in their daily life, the students usually write the informal letter to his/her parents, friend, family. They prefer to write the informal letter than formal letter, because formal letter usually used in office.

Furthermore, based on the observation result, it can be seen that several students have some difficulties in using mechanic especially in putting punctuation, they did not know how to put it correctly to separate the sentence. Mechanic aspect is very important in writing because it is systematically help the students in order to make their writing can be organized well. In addition, by paying attention to the mechanic aspect such as punctuation can help the students in order to separate the first idea to the next idea. Moreover, mechanic is very important because it is related to how the students write the letter structurally and grammatically, if the students can use the mechanic well, their writing would understand easily, this statement supported by Seglin and Colleman (2002, p.2) “the components of a letter are effective only if you know the proper mechanic involved in a letter’s structure and appearance”.

One main reason that writing is a language skill that very important for the student in language learning. Writing informal letter is necessary for the student in order to convey their idea to his friend or family and they usually do it everyday. So, in order to make their letter can be understood by the reader, the students have to pay attention to the rules of writing, in this case is mechanic aspect.

In addition, other students’ difficulties are how they start their writing; they still get difficulties in writing topic sentence as the beginning of the sentence. In fact, for some students, it is confusing to make a sentence and how they can write it as the complete paragraph.

“The writing skills are complex and difficult to teach, requiring mastering not only of grammatical and rethorical devices but also of conceptual and judgmental elements. The following analysis attempts to group in many and varied skill necessary for writing into four main areas:

- 1) Language use: the ability to write correct appropriate sentences;
- 2) Mechanical skill: the ability to use correctly those conventions peculiar to the written language – e.g. punctuation, spelling;
- 3) Treatment of content: the ability to thinking creatively and develop thoughts, excluding all irrelevant information;
- 4) Stylistic skill: the ability to manipulate sentences and paragraphs, and use language effectively;
- 5) Judgement skill: the ability to write in an appropriate manner for a particular purpose with a particular audience in mind, together with an ability to select organizes and order relevant information.” (Heaton, 1988, p.135).

According to Harmer (2004, p.44) “Writing, like any other skill, has its ‘mechanical’ components. These include handwriting, spelling, punctuation, and the construction of well-formed sentences, paragraphs, and texts”. In fact, for some students not all the component of writing can be mastered by the students. Moreover, the students only write whatever they want to write without attention of writing rules. Based on the explanation above, the research investigated the students’ difficulties in using mechanic in writing informal letter. Therefore, the title of this research is *An Analysis of Students’ Difficulties in Using Mechanic*

in Writing Informal Letter (A Research conducted at the third grade students in SMP Negeri 3 Gorontalo).

1.2 Problem Statement

From the explanation in basic consideration above, the problem statement formulated as follows:

1. What are the students' difficulties in using mechanic in writing informal letter?
2. What are the factors that made the students difficult in using mechanics in writing informal letter?

1.3 Objective of the Research

The objectives of this research are to describe the student's difficulties and the factors that made students difficulties in using mechanics in writing informal letter.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

Based on the problem statement, the scope of the study of this research is limited in using mechanics in writing informal letter. Informal letter is vary like letter to family, to friends, etc. In this case, family letter is chosen to limit this research. Mechanics itself divided into: **spelling, punctuation, sentence and paragraph**. The limitation of paragraph maximal up to 4 paragraphs and the

words maximal used up to 250 words. In addition, I limit the mechanic in spelling, punctuation, sentence and paragraph.

1.5 Reason for Choosing the Topic

This research is conducted based on some reasons for choosing the topic as follows:

1. To know the students' difficulties in using mechanic in writing informal letter
2. To get more knowledge about mechanics in writing skill.
3. Writing skill is very important to be mastered by students.

1.6 Significant of the Study

Significant of this research are:

1. To give more information to the teacher about the problem of students in using mechanics in writing informal letter.
2. To give a forceful motivation to the students to practice in writing by using mechanics
3. It is expected can be useful reference for the next researcher in order to study the mechanic in other object of research.

1.7 Basic Assumption

Basic assumptions of this research are:

1. The students has various difficulties in using mechanic in writing informal letter
2. Informal letter is one of writing skill and the students have studied before.