

## **CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Background of the Study**

In this era, English has an important role. English is one of the languages that are widely used in every aspect of life such as science, education, business and entertainment. There are four skills in learn English such as speaking, listening, reading and writing. This research will focus on one of the skills, which is writing. In the world of education, writing skill is essential for both students and teachers. For students, writing can make it easier for them to pour all their ideas into creative, good, and exciting writing. Also, students can improve their English through writing. However, being able to write well is not easy, especially in a foreign language like English. The students encountered difficulties while learning writing in English. The complexity of writing itself may be a source of difficulty. Writing in English can be difficult for students because it requires them to use almost all of their linguistic skills, such as the ability to use vocabulary, the ability to use grammar, the ability to gather information, and the ability to organize the information to produce a good writing.

As stated by Yulianawati (2017), Writing is a skill that teaches how to express one's ideas in a way that requires mastery of all elements in the target language, including grammar, content, organization, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, and mechanics. Furthermore, writing is a productive skill that encompasses cognitive processes such as expressing intentions, composing ideas, problem-solving, and critical thinking (Jebreil et al., 2015 in Bulqiyah, 2021). Meanwhile, writing is a necessary skill for achieving success in any academic context. To produce a good piece of writing, there are five aspects to pay attention to, such as content, form, vocabulary, grammar and mechanics.

Then there is one type of writing, which is the essay. An essay is a piece of writing that consists of several paragraphs that discuss a particular topic or issue (Oshima & Hogue, 2007) in (Toba, R. & Noor, W.N., 2019). More specifically, an essay is a piece of writing that consists of one topic divided into several paragraphs (one for each major point), beginning with the introductory paragraph and ending with the concluding paragraph (Oshima & Hogue, 2006). Even though it's crucial, many students struggle with a significant number of obstacles that prevent them from writing effective essays.

Difficulties in writing an essay, Koch (2004) (as cited in Belkhir & Benyelles, 2017) defines coherence as the writer's ability to combine the arrangement of sentences in the text so that the reader can decode and understand it. Such an idea draws attention to the consideration of coherence in any piece of writing as a cognitive process in which the writer is invited to consider the language they are using, the vocabulary they are choosing, and the bound arrangement of sentences to form unity that allows the reader to appreciate the piece of writing. The source of students difficulties in essay writing are the absence of motivation and reading.

Several studies on exploring students' difficulties in essay writing have been conducted. Asma Belkhir and Radia Benyelles (2017) stated that students struggle with coherence and cohesion due to a lack of reading, first language transfer, and writing practice. Thao (2019) also stated that the students encountered difficulties such as coherence and cohesion, mother language transfer, then grammatical issues a lack of ideas and time constraint. Another difficulties encountered by students while writing an essay such as pre-writing and pre-drafting (Ashrafiany, Hasanudin and Nonny Basalama, 2020).

The majority of previous studies have revealed that students have difficulties in all aspects of writing including grammar or language use, mechanics, cohesion and coherence, lack of idea and lack of motivation.

This research then attempts to explore difficulties students face in the writing an essay. In particular, the researcher plans to analyze the difficulties faced by the students in writing an essay.

According to background above, the researcher decided to conduct a research for analyzing the students' difficulties. The difficulties is a state in which students are unable to study due to interference. Students' lack of understanding of the subject causes learning problems. This impeded the learning process and resulted in lower learning achievement. Djamarah (2011) defines difficulty as a circumstance in which a learner is unable to learn organically owing to risks, impediments, or diversions in the study. Moreover, according to Westwood (2008), difficulties at the word level entail problems in comprehending, applying phonic knowledge and orthographic units in words, and employing analogies and contexts of sentences or paragraphs. Based on the experts' explanations of the difficulties, the researcher considers that the difficulty is a state in which children encounter learning disorders, which occurs because students struggle to grasp words, phrases, or paragraphs in writing. As a result, the learning process fails miserably.

However, in this study, the researcher focused on students' difficulties in writing an essay at IKIP PGRI Pontianak. The reason of this research had done at IKIP PGRI Pontianak is because there is an English education study program and writing an English essay is one of the college students tasks, especially for those who study English. The subject in this research are the second semester English students at IKIP PGRI Pontianak because when they enter the second semester, they met an essay writing course. Through this course, students are expected to have the skill to write a good essay in order to be able to do academic and non academic writing. And the researcher really hopes that writing as an English study can be well accepted by them, especially essay writing. This research is important to conduct because apart to find out what actually the students' difficulties in writing an essay.

## **B. Research Questions**

That questions that will be answered in this study namely :

1. What are the difficulties of second semester English students at IKIP PGRI Pontianak in writing an essay?

## **C. Research Purposes**

The purposes of this study is to find out about :

1. Students difficulties in writing an essay of second semester English students at IKIP PGRI Pontianak.

## **D. Significances of Research**

Significances research is literally an attempt to find, develop and test the truth of a science and a good study must provide important benefits and impacts for the subject under study, information, the environment and also further research. In this study, two meanings are obtained from the point of view of theory and practice. It can help researchers in order to determine whether the topic is worthy of research or not. Researchers can limit the scope required in an investigation.

Thus, researcher believe that this area of research can provide more useful contributions students, lecturers, other researchers, and researcher, to be more aware and improve their abilities.

1. Theoretical Significances

This research can be used as the references for someone who wants to do a research in difficulties in writing especially writing an essay.

2. Practical Significances

With the preparation of this research, it is hoped that this research in particular can make a valuable contribution to students, teachers, other researchers, and researcher.

a. To Students

The researcher hopes this research can be useful for students to know the difficulties when participating in an essay writing class.

b. To Lecturer

This research is very important for lecturer, because the findings in this research can be used as reference material to know the students difficulties in writing an essay.

c. To Other Researchers

The researcher really hopes this research can help other researchers as a reference in order to explore more ideas and helps others improve their knowledge for a plan.

d. To Researcher

This research is critical for the authors to gain a greater understanding of students difficulties, and also how to deal with the difficulties that writers face in the future.

## **E. Scope of Research**

### **1. Research Variable**

A variable is a characteristic or attribute of a person or organization that (a) researchers can measure or observe and (b) varies across people or organizations studied. Measurement entails gathering information from individuals by asking them to answer questions. And when variables vary, scores will take on different meanings depending on the type of variable being measured (Creswell, 2012:112). This research is single variable, a single variable not tied to any variable. Single variable is a variable that does not effect other variables (Cresswell, 2014 : 116). According to the definition above, the single variable of this study is students difficulties in writing an essay.

## 2. Research Terminology

This study can be describe clearly and does not caused misunderstanding, the following are the term contain in the title of the study as follows :

### a. Writing

Writing, according to Yulianawati (2017), is a skill that teaches the writer how to express his or her ideas in a way that requires mastery of all elements in the target language, namely grammar, content, organization, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, and mechanics. Furthermore, Writing is a productive skill that encompasses cognitive processes such as expressing intentions, composing ideas, problem-solving, and critical thinking (Jebreil et al., 2015).

### b. Essay

An essay is a piece of writing that consists of several paragraphs that discuss a particular topic or issue (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). Connelly (2013), on the other hand, defined an essay as a collection of related paragraphs that support a thesis. An essay is a piece of writing that consists of one topic divided into several paragraphs (one for each major point), beginning with the introductory paragraph and ending with the concluding paragraph (Oshima & Hogue, 2006).

### c. Difficulties in Writing an Essay

According to Harmer (2006a), there are a variety of factors that prevent them from writing. First, there is a fear of failure, or of not being able to achieve their goals, particularly in contexts where they are asked to reflect on their knowledge of the language and their abilities in applying this knowledge in various frameworks. Second, they are afraid of making mistakes, which prevents them from writing. In this sense, students are uneasy about the structure of the essay or any other

piece of writing that they are expected to follow. Third, some students are hesitant to show their work; they hide their flaws and convince themselves that they will fail in the future if they continue to write.