

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. The Background of the Study

In language learning, writing has always been one of the other three skills like listening, speaking, and reading, that needs to be mastered by students. It is a must have skill for them to share everything that goes to their mind or everything they experienced.

Byrne (1979:1) states that writing is the encoding of a message that we translate our thoughts into language. The message can be delivered by either spoken or written. Spoken and written form of communication have different characteristics. In speaking, the listener can directly ask for clarification related to the message so that the speaker can repeat or explain it further. Moreover, through speaking, the speaker can express his or her feeling through loudness, rhythm, speed, pauses and even gestures. It makes the listener feel the emotion or get the message easily. Meanwhile, in writing, the message should be clearly written. It should be achieved through the use of appropriate word choices, correct sentences form and clear ideas organization.

For Indonesia's educational context which is realized in syllabus, writing skill is expected to be able to be mastered by students. To do this, students are demanded to be able to be fully engaged with the task by utilizing their knowledge and

experience. Besides, to produce a written text well, students need to learn not only the spelling and punctuation, but also ways of organizing text at sentence level and above (Sharples 1999:13). However, it is often found that students' writing skill is still low in terms of its connection between sentences (cohesion) and meaning as a whole piece of writing (coherence), as it is shown on this following short paragraph:

***JR's Argumentative Writing: Should Students be Allowed to Bring Cellphone to School?***

*In our school a lot of students bring cellphone. But the school make the rule that forbid students to bring phone. The headmaster ever tell us about the trouble of allowing students to bring phone to school.*

*He said "When school student bring phone they will lose their concentrate. They will play game, chatting, even when the test they will cheating. They think it's a nice and cool thing to do.*

From the paragraph above, the student shows connections between sentences but it lacks of coherence since the idea is not completely stated and the writer does not stand from his viewpoint.

Meanwhile, it is required that sentences within a text need to be connected to each other so that the reader will be easier to understand the sequence (Brostoff, 1981). In addition, Harmer (2004:22) asserts that for writing to be truly accessible, it needs to be both cohesive and coherent. Cohesion exists where the interpretation of any item in the text requires making reference to some other item in it (Halliday 1976:11). Meanwhile, coherence is the overall texture of a text on how it makes sense to readers (Harmer, 2004:22). Garing (2014) also states that these two terms are some factors to call a text as communicative. Thus, it is important not only for the students

to be able to produce such a meaningful text, but also the teachers need to teach and help the students to recognize the use of cohesion and coherence as the criteria of either good or accessible writing.

For the twelfth grade students, in this case, natural and social science class, they are specifically demanded to be able to write an argumentative text. Regarding to this point, teachers need to have an understanding that there are some factors that contribute to their students' argumentation (Deane *et.al*, 2008:47), they are: (1) linguistic skill, (2) background knowledge, (3) critical thinking skill. If they are good for the three factors, it can be said that they will produce a cohesive and coherent writing.

In relation to cognitive process, in this case the cognitive process due to the students' major in writing argumentative writing, Safitri (2013) concluded that Natural Science students tended to plan their writing well in which they generated new ideas for each topic sentence and to support them in paragraphs. Thus, her findings is in line with the theory of Stenberg in her study, who states that the Natural Science students tend to adhere rules and procedures while Social Science students tend to have liberal thinking like surpassing rules and procedures. Thus, Natural Science students also wrote their argumentative writing according to steps. Unlike the Natural Science students, she also added that the Social Science students' writing avoided planning and reviewing.

Safitri's (2013) study focused on the difference between the Natural and Social Science students in terms of cognitive process applied to produce

argumentative writing. She claimed that the difference was resulted from the different majors of the students. If it was true, then the product of their argumentative writing in terms of coherence and cohesion would be different too. To ensure this idea, this study was conducted with the title of “Cohesion and Coherence of Argumentative Writing of the Students with Natural and Social Science Majors”.

### **B. The Problems of the Study**

The problem of the study is formulated as follow:

1. How do the Senior High School students of Natural and Social Science majors use cohesion of their argumentative writing?
2. How do the Senior High School students of Natural and Social Science majors use coherence of their argumentative writing?
3. How do the two students' majors influence the cohesion and coherence of their argumentative writing?

### **C. The Scope of the Study**

This study is limited to the study of coherence and cohesion on students' argumentative writing. The cohesion and coherence was examined and categorized into its types. The application of the two terms was compared between the students' majors which consist the class of 12 IPA 2 and 12 IPS 2.

#### **D. The Objectives of the Study**

In relation to the problems, the objectives of the study are:

1. To describe how the Natural and Social Science students use cohesion on their argumentative writing.
2. To describe how the Natural and Social Science students use coherence on their argumentative writing.
3. To describe whether their majors influence the cohesion and coherence on their argumentative writing.

#### **E. The Significances of the Study**

Theoretically, the findings of this research will contribute to either strengthening or modifying the theory of writing especially the one related to the relationship between critical thinking with the quality of writing, in this case, the quality that refers to the cohesion and coherence.

Practically, the findings of this research will be useful for:

1. the teachers in their attempt to make their teaching writing better by taking the critical thinking ability into account.
2. the students of high school or university level so that they are able to produce a cohesion and coherence writing.
3. other researchers, as a reference for conducting further research in relation to cohesion and coherence.