

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 The Background of Study

The English language has become one of the compulsory subjects in the education curriculum in Indonesia taught in kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, and up to the university. Nonnative students find it necessary to learn English as a foreign language that will help them in future endeavors. They have to master English because it is one of the requirements in many areas.

English has four skills that students need to focus on; Writing, Speaking, Reading, and Listening. The skills must be learned as one because they complement each other. The process of listening is related to the process of speaking and the process of reading is related to the process of writing. Students must learn diligently, understand the characteristics of these four skills, and practice often to be able to master English well and equally. However, this research focused only on writing skills.

Writing is a productive skill and an important skill in English. Meyers (2005: 2) stated that writing is a way of producing language which writer does when they speak naturally. Writing also makes it easier to deliver messages because it is not required to meet face to face as the writer does to the reader and usually includes formal communication. Moreover, as cited in Wijokongko (2015: 15), Hedge (2000) stated that writing is managed by a composting process that includes setting goals, generating ideas idea's on text, organizing information, revising, rewriting, and editing.

Students find it difficult in learning writing because they have to master and think about the ideas in detail. Sometimes they take a long time just to make up what they have to write before writing. Students need clear instruction about what they have to do in writing. However, the teachers have to find explanation strategies to avoid misunderstanding. Students' low interest affects their writing skills because they do not give good attention while learning writing.

Students' writing skills can be improved by writing about something, whether in an essay or a paragraph. There are different types of writing, including argumentative, persuasive, narrative, and descriptive. The researcher will talk about an argumentative essay in this study.

According to Graff & Birkenstein (2010), students can challenge their own ideas by contrasting them with opposing viewpoints in argumentative essays. Additionally, they said that in a society that is becoming more varied on a global scale, democratic citizenship is especially important when it comes to engaging with other people's opinions. In events or debate competitions, argumentative language is most frequently utilized, as we can see on television.

According to the explanation given above, it follows that an argumentative essay contains a reasonable argument that offers supporting information and reasoning about a topic, regardless of our agreement or disagreement with it. The capacity to engage with the ideas of others is particularly important for democratic citizenship.

The researcher discovered certain challenges in producing an argumentative essay, such as a lack of vocabulary, difficulty coming up with ideas, and inappropriate placement of essay structures in each paragraph, based on his or her own and some of their friends' experiences in the previous semester. As a result, the researcher wants to evaluate the student's argumentative essay writing skills.

## **1.2 The Limitation of Study**

This study is focusing on the generic structure of an argumentative essay consist of an introduction, body, and conclusion and also the language features. And focuses on the students' abilities in writing argumentative in the English Department at the University of Islamic North Sumatera. In this research, the researcher takes one class of eight-semester students. The action research is used to find the students' abilities in writing argumentative essays.

## **1.3 The Formulation of Problem**

Concerning the background of the study, the problem of this study is formulated as follows "Do the students able in writing an argumentative essay?"

## **1.4 The Research Objective**

Based on the formulation of the problem stated above, the main objective of the study is to find out the students' abilities in writing an argumentative essay.

## **1.5 The Significances of Study**

Theoretically, this study is anticipated to provide a realistic portrayal of Indonesian students' abilities for writing argumentative essays. Students are expected to gain new knowledge from experiencing real-world learning situations, which will enhance their success in this area. Practically speaking, it is anticipated that this study will provide a wealth of knowledge about the students' abilities, enabling English teachers to assist students in resolving their problems and encouraging caution in future writing.

For the students, this study will be a guide in writing an essay and help them in implementing the techniques in writing. Furthermore, students will realize that they use prewriting techniques in writing. And for the researcher, this research is hoped to be input and used as one of the sources for further research.