

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

This chapter presents the analysis result of writing test, questionnaire and interview that had been conducted in SMA Xaverius 3 Palembang. The findings and interpretations of the data were described in the following discussion.

#### 4.2 Findings

##### 4.1.1. The Results of Test

The table below illustrates the results of the writing test assessed by two raters. There were some difficulties on participants' writings which were detected by the raters.

**Table 4.1**  
**Recapitulations of Students' Difficulties in Descriptive Writing**

No	Areas of Difficulties	Percentage (%)
1	Ideas Development	40.81%
2	Organization	43.71%
3	Language Usage	47.33%
4	Sentence Structure	57.55%
5	Mechanics and Conventions	61.06%

The data showed that there were five aspects of students' difficulties in descriptive writing those are ideas development, organization, language usage, sentence structure, mechanics and conventions. The highest errors (61.06%) were found in mechanics and conventions aspects. Meanwhile, the lowest error (40.81%) was figured out in ideas development aspect.

**4.1.2 The Results of Questionnaire**

**4.1.2.1 Background Information**

This table presents the recapitulations of students’ background information.

**Table 4.2**  
**The Recapitulations of Background Information**

<b>Sub Categories</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male	21	52.5
	Female	19	47.5
<b>Major</b>	Science	28	70
	Social Science	12	30
<b>Level</b>	Outstanding	1	2.5
	Good	11	27.5
	Average	26	65
	Low	2	5
	Very Low	0	0

Based on the table above, it could be figured out that there were (52.5 %) male students and (47.5%) female students. Moreover, (70%) of them were science students and (30%) were social science students. In addition, dealing with English level, the majority of students (65%) was in average.

**4.1.2.2 Writing Proficiency**

The following table shows the recapitulations of students’ writing proficiency.

**Table 4.3**  
**The Recapitulations of Writing Proficiency**

<b>Subcategories</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	
<b>Motivation</b>	Yes	21	52.5
	No	19	47.5
<b>Writing Proficiency</b>	Outstanding	0	0
	Good	12	30
	Average	23	57.5
	Low	5	12.5
	Very Low	0	0

The data above revealed that out of 40 participants, (52.5%) students were motivated to learn writing and others were not interested in learning writing (47.5%). In relation to the writing proficiency, (57.5%) of students were in average level, (30%) in good level, (12.5%) in low level and none of the students were in outstanding and very low levels.

#### 4.1.2.3 Writing Difficulties

The table below indicates the recapitulations of students' writing difficulties and others related to the writing behavior.

**Table 4.4**  
**The Recapitulations of Writing Difficulties**

Sub Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
<b>Writing Difficulties</b>	Vocabulary	14	35%
	Punctuation	17	42.5%
	Spelling	15	37.5%
	Coherence	6	15%
	Academic Style	7	17.5%

Based on the data above, it could be figured out that students found punctuation was the most difficult aspect in writing (42.5%), the next was spelling (37.5%), vocabulary (35%), academic style (17.5%) and the lowest error was found in coherence aspect (15%).

Dealing with the students difficulties, the result of questionnaire also revealed about students tendency in following steps of writing where (75%) of students stated that they followed the steps/stages and the rest (25%) didn't follow it. Furthermore, in relation to the writing process, most students (70%) tended to use dictionary to help their writing assessment and the rest (30%) students did not.

Related to their writing strategies, 52.5% of students tended to use think aloud model to support their writing and 47.5% of students used others strategies namely: independent writing which relies on their skills and the information acquired from teacher in order to accomplish the writing task. In addition, most of the students stated that interesting material and fun method were significant aspects to support the improvement of their writing skills.

#### **4.1.2 The Result of Interview**

The researcher interviewed 10 students by asking 7 questions, to find out the detail information related to students writing difficulties. The first question asked about students' opinion of writing skill. Based on the result of interview, there were 4 students mentioned that writing was important, 2 students described that writing was interested, 2 students claimed that writing was quite difficult, and 2 students said that writing was difficult. In line with it, one of the students stated that "In my opinion, writing is quite difficult for me, because I don't really like about writing and I can't use correct spelling".

The second and six questions were about writing difficulties and more specifically in descriptive writing. The most difficult aspect found in grammar and punctuation. Other aspects were vocabulary, idea, sentence structure, and spelling. A student said that "First is punctuation and the second is capitalization". Another question related to the students'

experience in learning descriptive text. 9 students described that they have learned descriptive text since junior high school and one of them said that she has learned it from 5 grade of elementary school. As the student responded “I have ever learned it since I was in 7 grade of junior high school, it was about 4 years”.

The third, question and the fourth questions presented about the most difficult aspect and writing proficiency. There were 3 students stated that grammar and sentence structure were the most difficult aspects in writing. A student said “The most difficult aspect is grammar because I have problem in grammar”. In relation to the writing proficiency, most of students claimed that they were in average level. As stated by a student in this statement “I think that I am good enough at writing”.

The last question mentioned about how students’ overcome their writing difficulties. 6 students stated that they asked teacher and friend to help them to solve their problem of writing assessment. Meanwhile, the rest of the students mentioned that they did writing practice and used dictionary to solve the problem. One of students mentioned “I have to write as much as I can and read a lot of references such website and books to enhance my vocabulary”.

## 4.2 Interpretation

Based on the data obtained from the tests, questionnaire and interview, the researcher claimed that students' faced difficulties in descriptive writing. It was proven by the result of the students writing test which showed that the majority of student's errors were in mechanics and convention aspects and sentence structure. In addition, other problems were also found in language usage, organization and ideas developments aspects.

Mechanics and conventions were the first dominant problems found in students' writing. Mechanics and conventions problems refer to an errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization and paragraphing (Fiderer, 1999). In line with it, the participants of this study had the problems in spelling. Student number 02 wrote "I am feeling so **greetful** to have such a nice and lovely family". The word **greetful** should be **grateful**. Bahloul (2007) believes that the main cause of spelling errors and spelling proficiency development is the irregularity of the English writing system.

Related to punctuation problems, student number 39 pointed out "My room has a TV which I rarely use because I often play **my handphone 2 wardrobe which is used to my shoes my clothes my brothers' clothes, my aunt clothes and my cousins' clothes because my aunt and my cousin** often visit my house". These sentences provided unclear punctuation especially comma and period and also made the reader confused after reading the sentences. Students usually committed problems in using commas, full stops, semicolons and colons which

affected communication process. As states Davidson, (2005) punctuation problem which may be the result of inadequate learning or inefficient teaching.

The second dominant problems was sentence structure aspect, it was found many grammatical errors in students' descriptive writings. According to Fiderer (1999), sentence structure is completed without no run fragments and there are a variations in type and length of the text. Student number 21 wrote **“My family is family humble. I have 2 sisters and 2 brothers. Name a my sister a Vaneesa”**. It was proven that major errors were appeared in students writing related to sentence structure. Unclear statement of the sentence and incorrect position of the noun. The other examples of student number 08 **“I very beast, I tall, my tall is 170cm, I smart because I not stupid “**. Students faced difficulties in using correct sentence structure and in creating a coherent form. Grammar skills include run-on sentences, fragments and verbiage, inclusion of necessary information, use of different type of sentences, subject-verb agreement, and placement of modifiers, tense agreement and parallel construction (Leisak, 1989).

Other problems found in language usage aspect. Language usage means the writing has lively and descriptive language. Precise verb and specific nouns explain and clarify the information. Student number 22 wrote **“My descriptive is my face, cute, my eyes color chocolate, my skin color black and white, my hair color black and chocolate**. Students wrote monotones of sentence and didn't give a clear information. Kharma (1986) states, as quoted by Alfaki (2015), learners have the problem of structuring the paragraph, topic development of a paragraph, structuring the whole discourse and a theme in a discourse

The other problems found in organization aspect. It was the second lowest difficulties in students' writing. Organization defined as the information is organized in a logical order. It has an introduction that engages and satisfy reader. Student number 16 stated "There are 5 rooms: 2 bedrooms, 1 living room, 1 bathroom, and 1 kitchen". In this sentence, there wasn't an introduction statement at the beginning of the paragraph while most of the students wrote at least one sentence to introduce their paragraph smoothly, for example "My favorite place is my house". Another problem which English learners faced is that of a well-organized presentation or description. Raimes (1983), as quoted by Alfaki (2015) states that the other problem of organization in student' writing is the difficulty of differentiating a topic and supporting ideas or generalizations and specific details.

The lowest problems identified in ideas development aspect. Ideas development means the topic is fully developed with relevant information included detail, descriptions, or anecdotes (a short amusing/interesting story about a real incident or person) and clarifies the ideas. Student number 39 wrote "**My favorite place is home. At home I can do anything. I can play game, sleep and eat. Sleep again anything else. I watch NBA, football and anything else.**" The idea of the paragraph was still ambiguous. Sometimes, it is also found that some ideas were written in one sentence only and also the idea of the paragraph was unclear enough. According to Ngabut (2003), as quoted by Sari et al. (2013) claims that when the students were encountered with the problem identifying main ideas and supporting sentences it is because they are not able to formulate main ideas and supporting sentence into an effective paragraph.



Based on the previous study related to the writing difficulties, it was figured out that students may produce sentences that are generally less syntactically complex, and their sentences typically contain more grammatical errors (Myklebust, 1973). These writers also produce sentences that are shorter; have higher percentages of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling errors; and are lower in overall quality than those of their more skilled peers (Graham & Harris, 1989; Houck & Billingsley, 1989; Newcomer & Barenbaum, 1991).

In relation to the result of questionnaire, one of the questions asked about students' difficulties in writing which showed that punctuation, spelling, and vocabulary were the highest problems appeared. These problems could be assumed because of students' writing proficiency, most of them in average level and they weren't motivated to learn writing. The significance aspect to support their writing was interesting material and fun method. In conjunction with it, Mukminatien (1991) states that the difficulties are not merely caused by the students' themselves but they can also be caused by the unvaried and uninteresting techniques of the teachers in teaching writing. These will affect to the result of students' boredom and less motivation in learning it.

In addition, based on the results of interview, most of the students mentioned that writing is important skill in learning English. A student number 01 said "In my opinion, writing is important because it can help us to apply the job especially in the making of curriculum vitae; we have to write in English language". Writing is not only essential for academic but also career development and achievement. Dudley-Evans et al. (1998) point out that the students are

required to produce specific writing genres such as essay, summary, critical review, and research paper. Meanwhile, in career field, writing facilitates people to write articles, books or other long form texts.

Students' number 04 said "Writing is quite difficult for me because I don't really like about writing. I have a lot of difficulties in writing". Their difficulties in writing included punctuation, grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, spelling and ideas. Previous related study showed that writing becomes difficult skill when it is learned by the foreign language learners. Based on the statement of Rass (2001), writing is a difficult skill for native speakers and non-native speakers; because writers must be able write it in multiple issues such as content, organization, purpose, audience, vocabularies and mechanics such as punctuation, spelling, and capitalization.