

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the general issues related to the present study. These include the background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, and clarifications of key terms related to this study.

1.1 Background of the Study

The curriculum of English teaching in Indonesia stated by Ministry of National Education has been concerned with communicative competence of the students (Depdiknas, 2003). Further, it is stated that the communicative competence has been programmed to be gradually mastered from junior up to high school level. In turn, in high school level, the students are targeted to be able to communicate through spoken and written language appropriately. Concerning the communicative competence through written mode, the national curriculum prescribes that the writing competence to be achieved by the high school students is not determined by the number of words that the students can produce but more on the quality of the writing they produce which is characterized among others through the application of genre based writing (Depdiknas, 2003;13).

In order to pursue this goal, teachers are expected to take appropriate roles in developing students' writing competence. Consequently, the teachers themselves are required to have adequate writing competence in order to carry out their tasks well. To this point, there have been insufficient efforts to investigate the teachers' writing skills condition in Indonesia, and then contribute certain aspects they need to focus on to improve their writing

performance which in turn expectedly will give rise to the betterment of the teaching learning process in the classroom. Thus, it is necessary to examine teachers' writing competence in various genres prescribed in the national curriculum including the Exposition genre.

With regard to Indonesian teaching learning context, Emilia (2005) has conducted research related to this issue. Her research involving 18 participants of semester six student teachers of a *Bachelor degree* indicates that there is room for teachers' proficiency improvement in this field. Other research which takes teachers as the participants indicates a similar condition. Other studies also show that teachers in Indonesia still need to evaluate their writing performance. The national education office of Bandung mentions that writing for Indonesian teachers is still a matter to be carefully concerned by the ministry of national education (*Kompas.com*, 2009a). In a wider sense, the government reveals that Indonesian English teachers are of inadequate mastery related to their roles as teachers to teach writing skills. The research which involved 600 teachers from international standard schools of junior and senior high levels indicates that 60% of the teachers are even in the poorest writing proficiency standard as required by the government (*Kompas.com*, 2009b). These facts indicate that the need of developing and maintaining teachers writing skill is still a relevant issue to evaluate.

In some other countries, studies have been conducted to examine some related aspects of the teachers' writing competence in various perspectives by taking prospective teachers and teachers into account. For instance, Veal (1981) carried out research and found that that assessment of

the writing skill of prospective teachers might identify their writing ability. In addition, Cherednichenko (1987) as well as Gilfert (1999) found that teachers writing performance can reveal the teachers' professional development. Atay and Kurt (2006) have also carried out research concerning with 85 Turkish prospective teachers writing quality related to their anxiety. The research indicates that most of the teachers had difficulties in organizing their thoughts and producing ideas while writing in L2, especially those with high and average anxiety level. In addition, Holmes (2010) reveals that writing is still viewed as a daunting task by some teachers. His research which was conducted within EFL context shows that the teachers are still in need of evaluating and developing their writing performance

On the ground of this condition, this study aims to get more ideas of the teachers' ability and problem in writing as well as to find possible solutions to cope with the problems.

1.2 Research Questions

This research addressed the following questions:

1. What is the ability of the teachers in composing Exposition essays?
2. What problems do the teachers have in writing the essays?
3. What solutions can be proposed to help teachers improve their writing skills?

1.3 Aims of the Study

As mentioned above, this study was aimed at:

- (i) analyzing teachers' ability in writing Expository essays
- (ii) finding out certain teachers' problem in writing Expository essays.

(iii) proposing relevant possible solutions to improve the teachers' writing ability.

1.4 Significance of the study

This study reported here theoretically has attempted to provide a reference on the study on Expository writing. It was expected that this study can enrich the literature related to the teachers' ability in composing Expository texts. Furthermore, this study might be preliminary inputs for other researchers to further study in the similar area of research in different context.

Professionally, the results of this study expectedly can be beneficial for English teachers themselves to review their writing performance. This study may provide information on what problems they encounter. This will give them ideas to work on the betterment for their writing skills which in turn give rise to their awareness of teaching writing practices.

This study has been carried out to provide some features of teachers' writing performance which is necessary to be taken into consideration related to developing teachers' writing ability. Thus, to some extent, this study can also provide ideas for the government which is in charge of developing teachers' quality in dealing with teachers' development program. This may provide inputs for them to specify the matters to deal within in the teachers' training as well as up grading programs.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study is a case study researching writing ability of high school teachers' of English in Bandar Lampung. This research used text analysis to investigate the teachers' writing performance in composing argumentative text especially Hortatory and Analytical Expositions. The analysis focused on the schematic structure and the linguistic features employed in the writing of the argumentative texts. The analysis attempted to view the teachers' ability and problems in writing Exposition texts, the possible causes of the problems as well as the possible way of coping with the problems. Interviews were also conducted to confirm the findings gained from the texts analyses.

1.6 Clarifications of Key Terms

For the sake of clarity, key terms in this study were defined and specified as follows:

Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL): a model of text analysis as a point of reference and theoretical framework for the analysis of teachers' writing in terms of linguistic features particularly for the transitivity system. This model is developed by among others Halliday (1985, 1994); Martin and Rose (2007, 2008); and Eggins (1994).

Expository writing: a writing genre which comes with the purpose which is to take a position on some issues and justify it. This genre concerns with the analysis, interpretation and evaluation of the world around us. In this study, this genre covers Hortatory and Analytical Expositions as characterized by Derewianka (1990); Gerot and Wignell (1994); Gerot

(1995); Knapp and Watkins (2005); Macken and Horarik - cited in Johns - (2001) and Martin (1985).

1.7 Organization of the Paper

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter One covers general description of the introduction of the study. It provides background of the study, research questions, purpose of the study, and significance of the study, definition of key term and organization of the thesis. Chapter Two discusses relevant theories by which the present study underpinned, especially the theory of Argumentation and SFL as well as and related research. Chapter Three provides the methodological aspects of this thesis which consists of research design, research site, participants, data collection and data analysis. Chapter Four elaborates data presentation and discussion of each research finding. Finally, Chapter Five is the conclusion part and possible recommendation derived from this research.