

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of this study. It covers background, research questions, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, research methodology, clarification of terms and organization of the paper.

### 1.1 Background

In language teaching context, writing is one of crucial skills which is necessary to be possessed by students. This skill involves the students in meaning-focused use, language-focused learning and fluency development (Nation, 2009) to tell the readers about something and position them to accept the information said (Knapp and Watkins, 2005). In learning this skill, students are frequently demanded to master diverse types of texts. For vocational school students, one of texts which has to be mastered by them is business letter. Writing business letter is actually useful as a preparation step for one's future particularly in business field, such as for applying a job, working as a secretary, manager's or director's assistant (Chi, 2000).

Writing, however, is still regarded as the most complicated skill if compared to the others. As stated by Tangpermpoon (2008):

*When compared with other fundamental skills such as listening, speaking and reading, writing is the most difficult skill because it requires writers to have a great deal of lexical and syntactic knowledge as well as principles of organization in L2 to produce a good writings (p.1)*

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In the case of writing business letter, the problems often dealt with by students are mistakes in formatting, planning and using the language (Chi, 2000). Regarding mistake in formatting, most of students do not pay attention to the structure of letter, so this mistake type is often found in the exercises. In terms of mistake in planning, students usually do not put the ideas, information and figures clearly and properly, so those matters cannot help the readers to understand the letter correctly and persuasively. Concerning mistake in using the language, students always make a mistake in colloquial style. Furthermore, word choices for business expressions become a problem for them since they have not been familiar with (ibid).

Due to those problems, the teacher has to pay more attention to those matters and take into account a proper way to teach writing. One of ways out to overcome those matters is by employing process-genre approach in teaching writing. Process-genre approach is basically a synthesis of concepts both from process-based approach and genre-based approach (Badger & White, 2000; Kaur & Chun, 2005; Kim & Kim, 2005; Yan, 2005; Gao, 2007; Nordin & Mohammad, 2007; Babalola, 2012). Through process approach, recursive writing process such as prewriting, drafting, revision and editing are implemented while through genre-based approach, the ideas such as knowledge of the context, the purpose of writing and certain text features are adopted (ibid).

There were varieties of previous research on the use of process-genre approach to teaching writing which showed that this approach could improve students' ability in writing. One of them is the effects of process-genre based

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approach on the written English performance of computer science students in a Nigerian Polytechnic by Babalola (2012). The findings of this study revealed that process-genre based approach to the teaching of writing had significant effect on the students' written English performance. Another research was conducted by Gao (2007) who investigated the use of process-genre approach and finally recommended it to improve Chinese college English writing instruction. The result of the research showed that the English writing situation in Chinese universities and Chinese learners' writing proficiency could be enhanced.

Regarding the elaboration above, this study is performed to find out the extent to which the implementation of process-genre approach can improve students' writing ability in writing business letter and to investigate students' responses to the use of process-genre approach to teaching writing business letter in twelfth grade of vocational school.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

This study is proposed to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent can the implementation of process-genre approach improve students' writing ability in writing business letter in twelfth grade of vocational school?
2. What are students' responses to the implementation of process-genre approach to teaching writing business letter in twelfth grade of vocational school?

### **1.3 Aims of the Study**

In relation to the issues investigated, the aims of this study are:

1. To find out the extent to which the implementation of process-genre approach can improve students' writing ability in writing business letter in twelfth grade of vocational school.
2. To investigate students' responses to the implementation of process-genre approach to teaching writing business letter in twelfth grade of vocational school.

### **1.4 Scope of the Study**

This study is limited to two primary points regarding process-genre approach. The first point is the extent to which process-genre approach can improve writing ability of twelfth graders in vocational school in writing business letter particularly application letter and the second point is what students' responses to the use of process-genre approach in teaching writing business letter are.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study has several significances for theoretical, practical, and professional benefits. Concerning theoretical benefit, this study can be employed as a contribution for the research about process-genre approach in teaching writing business letter particularly to vocational school students in Indonesia. In terms of practical benefit, this study can be useful

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for students, teachers, and also for readers. For students, this study is expected to help them develop skill especially in writing skill. For teachers, this study gives beneficial findings for them to provide appropriate approach for their students in teaching writing. For readers, this study provides alternative approaches they can apply in teaching writing. Regarding professional benefit, this study can help teachers to enhance language teaching in EFL classroom particularly in teaching writing at vocational school.

## **1.6 Research Methodology**

### **1.6.1 Research Design**

The method employed in this study was Classroom Action Research (CAR). In this method, there are four basic steps namely planning, acting, observing and reflecting (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988, as cited in Burns, 2010). Action research consists of several cycles in which each cycle is composed of several meetings depending on the stages in process-genre approach.

### **1.6.2 Research Site and Participants**

The research was undertaken at one vocational school in Cianjur. The participants involved in this study were an English teacher, a student from Indonesia University of Education conducting the action research



and 28 twelfth graders. The twelfth graders had been chosen since application letter is taught at this grade.

### **1.6.3 Data Collection**

In this study, the data collection was composed of three instruments namely observation sheet, writing test and questionnaire.

Regarding observation, it was conducted to gain the data regarding not only the teaching and learning process but also teacher's way in teaching writing as well as students' action during learning process as an evaluation and reflection for the teacher in the next cycle. Concerning writing test, it was given in the end of each cycle. It was purposed to measure the progress of students' writing scores in every cycle. In terms of questionnaire, it was distributed to the students in the end of each cycle. It consisted of several close and open-ended questions. It was aimed at investigating students' responses to the implementation of process-genre approach to teaching writing business letter.

### **1.6.4 Research Procedure**

In this study, there were several steps to collect the data. First, the observation on the spot was carried out and some instruments including writing test and questionnaire were prepared. Second, the teaching and learning process was conducted by using process-genre approach and it

was observed by observer using the format of observation sheet. Third, writing test was given to the students to find out the extent to which the enhancement in students' scores after conducting process-genre approach. Fourth, the reflection made based on the result of observation in the class was then employed to improve the instructional activities in the next cycle. The last, questionnaire was distributed to the students to investigate their responses to the implementation of process-genre approach to teaching writing business letter.

#### **1.6.5 Data Analysis**

The data were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative data were gathered from the observation sheet and students' answers to open-ended questions in the questionnaire while quantitative data were gathered from students' writing scores and students' answers to close-ended questions in the questionnaire. The data from observation sheet were analyzed and interpreted to describe the activities during the implementation of process-genre approach. The result of students' writing test was analyzed using scoring rubric. Meanwhile, the data from questionnaire were analyzed using percentage formula and some procedures determined.

## 1.7 Clarification of Terms

Some terms are clarified to comprehend the notion underlying the title of this investigation.

1. Process-genre approach is a combination of process models and genre theories (Badger & White, 2000; Kaur & Chun, 2005; Kim & Kim, 2005; Yan, 2005; Gao, 2007; Nordin & Mohammad, 2007; Babalola, 2012).
2. Business letter is “used as a main channel of business correspondence” (Arvani, 2006:1).
3. Classroom action research is an action consisting of four basic steps in a cycle of research namely planning, acting, observing and reflecting (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988, as cited in Burns, 2010).



## **1.8 Organization of the Paper**

This research paper is organized into five chapters as follows:

### **Chapter I: Introduction**

This chapter contains background, research questions, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, research methodology, clarification of terms and organization of the paper.

### **Chapter II: Theoretical Foundation**

This chapter covers some relevant theories concerning writing, writing approaches, application letter and previous research on process-genre approach.

### **Chapter III: Methodology**

This chapter provides methodology consisting of research design, the research site and participants, data collection, research procedure and data analysis.

### **Chapter IV: Findings and Discussion**

This chapter explains the findings of the study based on the result of data analysis and presents the discussion as well.

### **Chapter V: Conclusion and Suggestions**

This chapter concludes this study and gives the suggestions for the other studies in the same field.