

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This initial chapter provides a broad outline of the present study, which explores the effectiveness of process approach in teaching writing narrative texts to the eighth-grade students of a junior high school. This chapter presents the background of the study, the research questions, the purposes of the study, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, clarification of some key terms, and the organization of the thesis.

1.1 Background of the Study

The importance of writing puts this language skill as a compulsory skill that the students need to learn. Writing is important as a means of communication through which people share information to develop their knowledge and even to open access to international markets (Lauder, 2008). Chalish & Masitowarni (2013) believe that people can express their emotions, knowledge, and information through writing. Undoubtedly, writing is declared as the most important skill in a literate society (Permadi, 2014), and contributes to the level of education (Emilia, 2010; Hyland, 2009; Kellogg, 2008). Thus, writing plays an essential role in social life, especially with regard to education.

Some studies report that most of the EFL/ ESL students are still in the low level in terms of their writing ability (Ihsan, 2016; Nordin & Mohammad, 2006; Kim & Kim, 2005). It also happens in Indonesia. This condition is probably because of most of the teacher in the schools in Indonesia have not implemented the current approach properly yet and/or the writing test had not been implemented satisfactorily (Ginting & Saukah, 2016). In other words, the English teachers' competence in Indonesia needs improvement (Sikki et al, 2013). As the original approach which develops the current approach in teaching- learning activity in

Indonesia, process approach is considered as an alternative way for the teachers to teach writing. Besides its simplicity, many studies have proved its effectiveness toward the teaching writing (Nurhidayah, 2014; Assaggaf, 2016; Zhou, 2015; Daze & Ebibi, 2014; Puengpipattrakul, 2014; Boas, 2011; Kang, 2006).

Writing is in general regarded as the last skill to master after the other three language skills, i.e. listening, speaking, and reading. In other words, someone has to master the other three skills long before being introduced to writing skill. The challenges in writing are also caused by its multifaceted activities, which include both cognitive and physical activities (Stoddard & Perry, 1998). Nik et al (2010) mentions that the necessary acquisition of grammar, vocabulary, and others relevant matters becomes the reasons for problems faced by EFL learners in writing.

For EFL learners, some grammatical aspects may cause problems because their mother tongues do not have them (Ariyanti, 2016; Suryani et al, 2015; Megaiab, 2014), and this may result a low writing skill. For example, It was found that Indonesian students' writing knowledge is very low with average score 52.02 out of 100 (Rukayah, 2014), and some other problems in grammatical (Faisal et al, 2017). In addition, in Pakistan, the problems in writing are mostly about linguistic proficiency, writing anxiety, lack of ideas and writing practice (Fareed et al, 2016). Because of its complexity, writing is often regarded as the hardest skill and requires a large amount of time to learn. Many students remarked that starting to write is a problematic thing (Alwasilah & Alwasilah, 2005; Bahtiar, 2011; Nunan, 1995; Leki, 1991; Shaughnessy, 1977).

Many studies have explored a variety of strategies to help students acquire writing skill. The studies have examined the use of round table strategy (Nurhasanah, 2014), comprehension strategy instruction (Dymock, 2007), think-pair-share technique (Sumarsih & Saragih, 2013), cubing technique (Chalish & Mashitowarni, 2013), and Journal writing (Tuan, 2010). In addition, several studies have also examined the effectiveness of some approaches to teaching writing, including the process approach or process-oriented approach (Agustiana, 2015).

Process approach is recommended as an approach to teaching writing because it offers systematic ways for students to produce a writing piece (Barnett, 1992; Keh, 1990). Producing a written work takes more time and instruction, and process approach provides the opportunity to help the students at any stage. "... Students need time and opportunity to think

what is to be written, to draft ...” (Goldstein & Carr, 1996, p.163). As the result of effective intervention, better papers can be produced by using the process approach (Hashemnezhad & Hashemnezhad, 2012). In the process approach, writing is regarded as involving various complicated procedures of a personal work of a writer (Reid, 1993) by which those procedures will be confronted by students in form of numbers of writing stages that consist of pre-writing, drafting, revising and editing, and final drafting (Hedge, 1988; Hasan & Akhand, 2010).

The use of process approach in TEFL have been examined by some scholars. Some studies focused on how process approach affected students’ motivation (Ho, 2006). Some other studies related process approach to students’ improvement in their writing performance (Pasand & Haghi, 2013; Cavkaytar & Yasar, nd.), writing instruction (Vanderpyl, 2012), and autonomous learning (King, 2008). Finally, studies most relevant to the present study examined the effectiveness of process approach in teaching a variety of texts, including recount, biography, and narrative texts (Ngadiman, 2012), report texts (Pujianto, Emilia, & M. I, 2014), essays (Alodwan & Ibnian, 2014; Akinwamide, 2012), and academic texts (Palpanadan, Salam, & Ismail, 2014; Samsudin, 2014). All the studies above revealed that process approach positively affected students’ writing skill. Different from the previous studies, the present study seeks to examine the effectiveness of process approach in teaching writing narrative texts in an Indonesian junior high school. The present study also explores how the students respond to the application of the process approach in teaching writing.

1.2 Research Questions

The problems of the present study are formulated in the following questions.

- a. How does process approach affect the students’ ability in writing narrative texts?
- b. What is the students’ attitude towards the use of process approach in teaching writing narrative texts?

1.3 The Purposes of Study

In accordance with the research questions formulated above, the present study aims to examine:

- a. the effects of process approach on the improvement of the students' ability in writing narrative texts,
- b. the students' attitude towards the use of process approach in teaching writing narrative texts.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the effect of process approach on the improvement of the students' skill in writing narrative texts, the ways it helps students improve their writing skill, and the students attitude towards the use of the process approach. The present study involves eighth graders of a junior high school in Bandung Barat district.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

This research is expected to make several contributions. First, it is expected to contribute to the literature regarding the theory and use of process approach in teaching writing, especially writing narrative texts. Second, the results of this study are expected to become useful information for teachers to make their teaching activities more effective. Teachers are expected to become more aware of the students' needs in learning to write and this becomes the basis for enhancing the students' ability in writing.

1.6 Clarification of Terms

For the purpose of the present study, some key terms are defined as follows:

- a. Process Approach

It is also known as process-oriented approach (POA) or process-based approach. It is a cyclical approach which focuses on the process. In this approach, students are needed to move from one stage to another and take part in the writing activities (Palpanadan, Salam,

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& Ismail, 2014). In addition, process approach is applicable for writing in a foreign language (Harmer, 2007a, p.326).

b. Narrative texts

It is “a text whose purpose is to relate an amusing or unusual experience in an entertaining way” (Gerot and Wignell, 1994, p.18). It is a text which tells a story (McCarthy, 1992, p.5). In this study narrative texts refer to personal narrative texts, which are linked to personal events and explained in a particular way (Salamanca González, 2015, p.67).

c. Writing skill

It is the skill to produce written texts. Writing is more than speech written down (Johnson, 2001, p.284). In this study, the students are encouraged to write their personal narrative texts step by step following the stages of the process approach.

1.7 Organization of the Thesis

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter I concerns the background of the study, the research questions, the purpose of the study, the scope and the significance of the study, clarification of some key terms, and the organization of the thesis. Chapter II elaborates the theoretical frameworks of this study, which include the theory of process approach, process approach in teaching writing, theory of writing, writing aspects, and narrative texts. Chapter III describes the research methodology, including research design, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures. Chapter IV presents and discusses the findings. Finally, Chapter V presents the conclusion of this study and offers some recommendation.