

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers the introduction of the research. It covers background of the study, research question, purpose of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of terms, organization of paper, and concluding remark.

1.1 Background

Writing has often been referred to as the most difficult skill of learning a foreign language. This is in line with Emilia (2009, p. 15) who stated that writing is “a difficult skill, especially for students who learn English as a foreign language.” Meanwhile, writing plays a significant role in the process of language learning. Writing is the provision for junior high school to continue study in senior high school or university settings. By the time students enter the senior high school and university, they will have been exposed to writing because numerous kinds of learning activities require them to write. Based on 2013 National Curriculum of Indonesia, moreover, writing is “one of language skills that should be taught to students aiming to enable them to write different types of texts.”

In spite of the importance of writing, some students still lack of confidence (Harmer, 2007, p. 113) of academic writing ability which has become a national issue in Indonesia. This might be happened because writing is “a complex process” (Brown, 2001, p. 335) because there are some procedures that should be conducted in writing, such as thinking, drafting, and revising procedures that require specialized skill. Moreover, Langan (2008, p. 11) mentioned that even professional writers does not automatically write a paper, they start with prewriting, scratch to outline, writing first draft, revising and editing/proofreading. They have to work step by step.

With regard to the complexity of writing, errors on students’ writing cannot be avoided. However, making errors is a crucial part of the learning process. This is in line with Ferris (2011, p. 9) who mentioned that “making error can be found as crucial parts in writing process because error can lead the students

to the better way in writing.” Ferris (2011, p. 9) added that to avoid students’ errors in writing process, “student needs distinct and additional intervention from teachers to bridge these gaps and develop strategies for findings, correcting, and avoiding errors in the writing issues.” Vygotsky cited in Okamura (2004, p. 69) stated that “students will be able to achieve their maximum potential by the help of more knowledgeable people.”

In this regard, one of the alternative ways to help students’ writing is providing supportive feedback from teacher; it can be oral or written feedback. Hyland (2006, p. 88) mentioned that providing feedback is “one of alternative strategy from teacher to improve students’ writing in teaching and learning processes.” Teacher feedback is expected to help students to minimize or even eliminate some errors that appear in their writing. Besides, in language learning and teaching processes, the teacher plays a role as a feedback provider (Harmer, 2007. p. 116) who should encourage and provide positive responses toward students’ writing.

However, Wena (2011, p. 58) stated that in the practice in giving feedback, “the feedback given by the teacher is unclear because it is inconsistently provided”. Whereas, “a good feedback should be given in consistently” (Wiggins, 2012, p. 15) and “without personal judgement or opinion, it is merely based on the facts and always neutral and objective” (Noor et al, 2010, p. 398).

Therefore, Brookhart (2008) mentioned that feedback can be powerful if it is done well and effective feedback can lead to the better writing. Additionally, Razali & Zupri (2014, p. 65) added that feedback is “brought positive changes on students’ writing.” Therefore, feedback those students receive provides the information about what is good and what needs to be improved, so that they can apply and make advantage of the feedback in their final work of their writing. This statement is supported by Purnawarman (2011, p. 14) who stated that “students who receive feedback from their teacher will pay more attention to what they have written.” However, feedback is useful for students when it is given to students during the writing process, it is because students can learn their errors in writing and revise their writing based on teacher feedback.

On the other hand, Erdogan (2005, p. 266) stated that feedback is not only important for students improvement in writing but also for teacher, because feedback can reflect the effectiveness of teacher teaching style and help the teacher to choose exact treatment to improve students' performance. Chandler (2008, p. 279) also proved it in an experimental research; Chandler found that accuracy of students' writing improved significantly over a semester when they corrected their error after feedback than when they did not. Teacher feedback in writing process is expected to give significance improvement in students' writing. As stated by Emilia (2011, p. 36) "consultation is important to give students feedback about their writing, which is really important for the students' writing development".

A number of studies have examined the effectiveness of teacher feedback (Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Ferris, 2003; Lee, 2008a). However, to the researcher's knowledge, there have only a few studies on written feedback in Indonesia EFL context such as those conducted by a few researchers (Irawati & Maharani, 2012; Lee, 2008a; Ngai, 2009; Purnawarman, 2011; Razali & Zupri, 2014; Widyasari, 2014 & Wen, 2013). None of these studies has been conducted in junior high school level. This study, aims to fill this gap by examining teacher written feedback on students writing at one public junior high school in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. Specifically, this study attempts to find out the strategies of teacher written feedback on students' writing. Moreover, this study aims to find out students' responses toward teacher written feedback on their writing. Thereby, based on the facts, issues, and theories stated above, this study focuses on *A Teacher's Written Feedback on Students' Writing: A Descriptive Study at One Public Junior High School in Bandung*.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the research, the problems to be inspected are:

1. What are the strategies of feedback employed by the teacher in giving written feedback on students' writing?
2. What are the students' responses toward teacher's written feedback on their writing?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

Based on the description in the background, this study is aimed to:

1. To find out the strategies of feedback are employed by the teacher in giving written feedback on students' writing.
2. To find out the students' responses toward teacher's written feedback on their writing.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on finding teacher's written feedback on students' writing, especially about the strategies of feedback given by the teacher on students' writing at one of junior high school in Bandung. The participants of this study were an English teacher and his thirty five students in eighth grade. The analysis of teacher's written feedback on students' writing is done in terms of ways providing feedback by using some relevant frameworks; there are the strategies of written feedback from Ferris (2003) and Ferris (2006). The data from students' document is taken from students' first draft, including students' recount text and students' memo.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The result of the study gave and informative inputs in teaching and learning English as a foreign language especially in practical, theoretical and professional benefits.

Theoretically, this study expects to improve students' understanding about their errors in writing based on the written feedback from the teacher. In addition, feedback from the teacher can make students aware about their errors in writing and make their writing better.

Practically, this study provides general guidance for developing the practice of teaching and learning writing with teacher written feedback and for teachers in selecting, designing, and using appropriate methods in teaching English writing.

Professionally, the result of this study inspires other writer to conducted a study about issues which are related to the application and development of their teacher written feedback. And this study useful and a helpful source for the teachers in teaching English by using teacher written feedback.

1.6 Clarification of Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding, some terms are explained in this part. The terms are clarified as follow:

Feedback can be defined as input a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision (Keh, 1990, p. 294)

Direct feedback is “a technique of correcting students’ error by giving an explicit written correction or the provision of correct answers in response to student errors” (Purnawarman, 2011, p. 18).

Indirect feedback in this study deals with “indicating the students’ error by underlines, circling, coding, or giving other marks without giving the correct form of the errors” (Ferris, 2006, p. 83).

Writing is “a part of learning process that should be mastered by the students, because writing is an important skill that has be learned beside the other language skills” (Cahyono, 2010, P. 91).

1.7 Organization of the Paper

The study is organized in five chapters. Each chapter has subtopics which are organized as follows:

Chapter I: Introduction

It provides the introduction part of the study which covers the background of the study, research questions, purpose of the study, clarification of related terms, and the organization of the paper.

Chapter II: Theoretical Foundation

This chapter provides information about the references that related with the study of this study. The aim of this study is to match the facts and theories that relevance in the study.

Chapter III: Research Methodology

This chapter focuses on the methodology used in the study: research design, research site and participants, data collection, data collecting procedure and data analysis.

Chapter IV: Findings and Discussions

This chapter will discuss findings and discussions of the study found from the explanation of classroom observations, students' document collection, questionnaire, and interviews.

Chapter V: Conclusions and Recommendations

This last chapter explains the interpretation toward the result of the study. The conclusions and recommendations in this chapter are expected to give benefits and inputs for the readers who want to know about written feedback or intended to do a study in the same field.

1.8 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has discussed the background of the study, research question, purpose of the study, clarification of related terms, and organization of the paper. In the next chapter, this paper will discuss the literature review of the study.