

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the study consisting of purposes of the study, significance of the study, and clarification of terms. In general, this chapter reflects the whole content of the study.

### 1.1 Background of the study

In learning English as foreign language, writing is one of the four important skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing). Writing is considered essential; for, it is a way of communicating someone's ideas in written forms. It has to do with proper knowledge of grammar, getting ideas, arranging ideas and developing details, selecting correct words, organizing ideas in correct sentence, and retaining paragraph unity (Laksmi, 2006). Although writing is an imperative skill, students still consider writing is difficult to master since different structural and grammatical terms as well as styles lie between *Bahasa Indonesia* and English (Ariyanti, 2016). Moreover, most students need to translate and transform the meaning from *Bahasa Indonesia* to English context to ensure the cohesion and the coherence of their writing. As a result, writing becomes a complex task for students to complete (White & Hall, 2014).

The teaching and learning of writing has been accommodated by the current curriculum. As an effort to deal with writing proficiency of Indonesian students, the government proposed curriculum 2004 carrying a genre-based approach for Junior and Senior High School. Genre-based approach involves the idea of teaching learners how to make use of language patterns to accomplish a coherent, purposeful composition (Hyland, 2003, p.18). The aim is to enable them to write as well as to achieve a certain goal, for example, how to retell, how to report, how to describe, how something is done or how something is carried out (Dirgeyasa, 2016). Hyland explained that the approach has been grounded from theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics which was initiated by Michael Halliday. This theory not only indicates the relationship between language and its social

functions but also organizes language as a system from which users make choices to express meanings.

In line with the approach, the students are required to learn genres and later write the text independently by passing through some stages namely Building Knowledge of the Field, Modeling of the Text, Joint Construction of the Text, Independent Construction of the Text (Emilia, 2011). One of the genres which is relatively difficult to write for students is argumentation because it contains density of technical vocabulary, heavy load of unfamiliar, complex and difficult ideas and concepts in logical connections (Derewianka, 1990). Generally known that there are two kinds of argumentative text namely discussion and exposition. The latter is then subdivided into analytical and hortatory exposition. The difference between these two types of exposition lies on the final structure of the text. Analytical is terminated by a conclusion while hortatory by a recommendation.

Among argumentative genres, hortatory exposition text is considered the most difficult to write since it aims to persuade the readers to think like what the writers want them to through the writing (Husein & Pulungan, 2016). Thus, the students must take particular things into account to make their writing persuasive and convincing. In academic community, hortatory exposition text is quite familiar since argumentative genre is usually found in the scientific books, journals, magazines, newspaper articles, academic speech or lectures, research report, and debate (Husein & Pulungan, 2016).

In learning hortatory exposition text, students are stimulated to think critically and give their ideas clearly as supporting evidences of the issue discussed (Emilia, 2005). This type of text will also enable the students to improve the ability of finding information to support their arguments and highlight the importance of anticipating arguments and replying to these (Sugiati, 2011).

Previous studies concerning argumentative text in Indonesian context have been conducted. First, a study carried out by Geraldine & Surmiyati (2010) attempted to find out the effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) to the teaching writing of hortatory exposition text. Second, the study done by

Fauziah (2014) tried to identify the students' ability and difficulties in writing hortatory exposition text by using Reading to Learn rubric of writing assessment. Third, another study by Syarifah (2016), focused on the scaffolding issue in the teaching of discussion text. Using SFL- genre based approach, this study intended to investigate how students improve their writing performance. Fourth, the study of R2L implementation in the teaching of writing analytical exposition has been held by Parida (2019). It aimed to investigate the implementation of R2L to scaffold disadvantaged students of a vocational school in learning analytical exposition text. Drawing from the previous studies, the teaching writing of argumentative especially hortatory exposition text has attracted experts' attention, showing that teaching hortatory exposition text requires particular treatment.

To deal with the problems, Reading to Learn (R2L) comes up as an alternative solution to be considered. It is a literacy program initially proposed by David Rose across Australia designed to effectively facilitate all students of all levels to read and write (Rose, 2005). R2L emphasizes various strategies to enhance students' writing, particularly of hortatory exposition text in this case.

Reading to Learn has been proved successful in improving reading and writing proficiency. The research by *the Australian government's What Works program* manifested general improvement in reading and writing of 2.5 profile levels. Since each English profile level equals a year and a half's improvement, this rate indicated nearly same as four year's improvement in one year (McRae et al, 2000).

Underlain by Systemic Functional Linguistics framework, this study attempts to investigate how Reading to Learn is implemented in the context of middle school in Indonesia and what improvements could be identified as a result of the program.

## 1.2 Research questions

This study attempts to address the following questions:

1. How is Reading to Learn implemented to teach students' writing of hortatory exposition text?
2. What improvements could be identified as a result of the program?

### 1.3 Purposes of the study

In line with the research questions, this study is carried out to investigate how Reading to Learn is implemented in Indonesian context and what improvements could be identified as a result of the process.

### 1.4 Significance of the study

The study is expected to give significance for several areas. Theoretically, the result of the research is expected to enrich the relevant theories about Reading to Learn in teaching writing, particularly writing hortatory exposition texts. Practically, the research is one of the ways to give an enhancement about the implementation of Reading to Learn in the teaching writing of hortatory exposition text. Professionally, the research hopefully could give the enrichment of knowledge to improve students' abilities in producing hortatory exposition text by practicing Reading to Learn in Indonesian context.

### 1.5 Clarification of terms

- Reading to Learn (R2L) : it is defined as a literacy program designed to facilitate all learners at all levels of education to read and write they need to succeed (Rose, 2016a),
- Hortatory Exposition Text : It is argumentative genre to persuade the readers to the writer's point of view. The writer states a position and then builds up series of arguments to support that position. The point of each argument is presented and elaborated with supporting evidence. The text is then terminated with recommendation or judgment which is presented as logical conclusion (Butt et al, 2000; 241)