# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents introductory parts of this thesis. The parts are the background of the problem, the scope of the problem, the formulation of the problem, the hypothesis, the assumption, the purpose of the research, the definition of the key terms, the significance of the research, and research method. This chapter shares issues about the research problem.

## 1.1 The Background of the Problem

Talking about writing in learning English, many people confess that it is the most difficult skill to acquire (Gibbons, 2002; Rivers cited in Hadley, 2001). Richards (1990) claims that learning to write is one of the most difficult tasks a learner encounters and that few people can be said to be master". In order to be master in writing, Myles (2002) suggests, "Writing skills must be practiced and learned through experience. The ability to write well is not a naturally acquired skill; it is usually learned or culturally transmitted as a set of practices in formal instructional settings or other environments". Perhaps writing might be seen as a continuum of activities that range from the more mechanical or formal aspect of 'writing down' on the end to the more complex act of composing on the other (Hadley, 2001). It is undoubtedly the act of composing or writing, though, which can create problems for students, especially for those writing in a second language (L2) in academic contexts. Formulating new ideas can be difficult because it

involves transforming or reworking information, which is much more complex than writing as telling (Myles, 2002).

The difficulty in writing has been becoming a serious problem faced by students. It is caused by some reasons as stated by Sugiharto (2007):

> The undetected problem that the students are facing in writing is that they are often not familiar with the convention of written language. That is, they have not yet developed a feel of convention that strictly governs the use of written language. The unfamiliarity with convention often becomes the main reason why students find it hard to express their ideas in a written form. Consequently if asked to write, their writing is characterized with typical spoken language features, which is hardly acceptable in writing.

The reasons of the difficulty make objective of the teaching writing hard to achieve. It means that teaching writing is still considered unsuccessful. It is in line with Lengkanawati's (1999) claims that the process of teaching and learning English, particularly writing in this case, in Indonesia is still facing many problems related to the students' learning outcome which is still considered as unsuccessful. It is accordance with Sadtono (1997) who states that eventhough English has been taught for six years, due to many reasons the result of teaching writing is still unsatisfactory.

In order to achieve the objective of teaching writing, relevant language inputs are needed. Therefore,

> Reading in the writing classroom is understood as the appropriate input for acquisition of writing skills because it is generally assumed that reading passages will somehow function as primary models from which writing skill can be learned, or at least inferred (Eisterhold cited in Kroll, 1991).

The development of writing ability of second language proficiency occurs in the same way: via comprehensible input with a low affective filter (Krashen, 1984).

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Krashen continues, "Writing competence derives from large amounts of self-motivated reading for interest and or pleasure. It is reading that gives the writer the 'feel' for the look and texture of reader-based prose".

This horizon can be inferred that "one of the most viable and less tedious ways is to expose students to reading -- particularly light reading or reading for pleasure. This is a sort of recreational reading with assorted topics that students find enjoyable" (Sugiharto, 2007). Parkinson and Thomas (2000) confirm, "Millions of people do or probably always will study, and read for pleasure, texts originally written in foreign language they have never studied, using translations in their, the readers', native language".

Reading for pleasure can be obtained from reading fiction. Reading fiction is one of the ways to motivate chidren or students to have reading habit since it can entertain readers. "Children want to read and write fiction. Of all the genres, fiction is usually their favorite" (Graves, 1994). In addition, reading fiction is involved as one of the Standard Competence of *Bahasa Indonesia* Subject for Senior High School students based on School-Based Curriculum 2007.

One of the popular kinds of fiction read by people is novel. Novel is known as the most important fiction for readers the 80s centuries (Brower written in Atwan and Vesterman, 1987). It is supported by Moretti in Hawthorn (2001) who states, "Be it mid eighteenth-century Britain…or mid nineteenth century Italy…the message is the same: the novel is the most important genre of all literary genres. And its centralization increases with the passage of time…." All of

these indicate the importance of novel of all literary genres at the time and perhaps nowadays as well.

The novel is included into narrative texts (Hawthorn, 2001) since the generic structure and language features of narrative texts are included in novel. Logically, reading novel mean reading and learning narrative texts. Wolfe (www.englishcompanion.com) states that narrative texts, e.g., novels, also help us to understand how other texts work by contrasting the different types through the study of different texts and how they work and are made. He continues, "Narrative fiction often provides the only encounter with the imagination during the course of the school day; in this one respect, teaching such texts is vital"

In fact, the writer's preliminary observation and informal interview shows that some students in Indonesia only like reading Indonesian novels, and they almost never read English novel because they said that it is hard to comprehend English novels. Reading Indonesian novel has become the students' hobbies recently. Some of popular novels read by the students are *Ayat-Ayat Cinta, Ketika Cinta Bertasbih, Laskar Pelangi,* and so on. Meanwhile, for reading English novels, the students only read the translated versions, such as Harry Porter and so forth. The preliminary informal interview concludes that those who like reading Indonesian novel, they also get better scores in writing English narrative texts.

The fact that those who like reading Indonesian novel, they also get better scores in writing English narrative texts deals with language literacy theory, that states first language literacy contribute to second or foreign language literacy. As Friedlander (cited in Kroll, 1990) claims, "Writer will transfer writing ability and

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the strategies, whether good or deficient, from their first language to their second language". Furthermore, Cameron (2001) argues, "Teaching reading and writing can utilize any transferable knowledge and skills from first language literacy". Another opinion is:

> When frequently exposed to reading of any kind -- be it novels, comics, newspapers, academic journals -- in a pleasurable way, readers unconsciously acquire the language of writing (e.g., grammar, vocabulary, spelling), which will become necessary components for writing (Sugiharto, 2007).

Based on the phenomenon above, this study is conducted to answer the problem whether there is a correlation between students' reading comprehension of Indonesian fiction and their writing ability of English narrative texts.

## 1.2 The Scope of the Problem

In this study, of all kinds of fictions, the researcher focuses on novel. Novel is selected because in the researcher's preliminary observation and informal interview in some schools reveal that most students like novel better than other kinds of fiction. It is also based on Moretti's claim quoted in Hawthorn (2001) that the novel is the most important genre of all literary genres. Moreover, Akyel and Yalcin (1990 cited in Parkinson and Thomas, 2000) confirm that the most effective literary form for helping high school students develop their linguistic skills and cultural awareness is the novel.

## 1.3 The Formulation of the Problem

The problem in this study is about the correlation between both variables as stated before. It can be formulated in the following question:

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Is there any correlation between students' reading comprehension of Indonesian fiction and their writing ability of English narrative texts?

## 1.4 The Hypothesis

Hypothesis can be stated in two kinds: alternative hypothesis and null hypothesis. In this thesis, hypothesis is better stated in both alternative hypothesis and null hypothesis in order to combine different reasons of using it (Arikunto, 2007).

The alternative hypothesis is there is correlation between students' reading comprehension of Indonesian fiction and their writing ability of English narrative texts. Alternative hypothesis is stated based on the previous findings or literature of the second chapter, and the researcher beliefs. (Arikunto, 2007)

It could be hypothesized that there is no correlation between students' reading comprehension of Indonesian fiction and their writing ability of English narrative texts. This null hypothesis is formulated in order to get precise statistical testing (Gay, 1987) by using a two-tailed test at 0.05 level of significance to reject it. "We use the null hypothesis and try to reject it. If we are able to reject the null hypothesis, we have support for the alternative hypothesis" (Hatch and Farhady, 1982).

## 1.5 The Assumption

There are some assumptions related to this problem. First, reading English books contributes to writing ability of English texts, since reading and writing in the same language are related each other. Second, many children like story. Third,

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most of the languages have the same patterns. Another assumption is that reading scientific material contribute to writing achievement.

## 1.6 The Purpose of the Research

The main purpose of this research is to answer the problem whether there is a correlation between students' reading comprehension of Indonesian fiction and writing ability of English narrative texts. It is appropriate with Gay's (1987) opinion, "A purpose of a correlational study may be to determine relationships between variables, or to use relationships in making predictions".

## 1.7 The Definition of the Key Terms

"The introduction also includes operational definition of terms used in the study which do not have a commonly known meaning' (Gay, 1987). There are some key terms in the present research that need explanatory:

a. Reading comprehension of Indonesian fiction means the result of the reading test about Indonesian fiction

b. Fiction means novel or story, fairy tales read by second grade students of SMA N 2 Bandung.

c. Writing ability of English narrative texts means the result of writing narrative test in English.

## 1.8 The Significance of the Research

The significance of this research is to give another horizon to two general inputs: practical input and theoretical input. Practical input of the research is related to three important components; the teacher, the students, and the next

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researchers. First, the result of the study is important in terms of providing English teachers with evidence that Indonesian fiction (novel/story) could be a learning media in reading and writing activities for successful implementation of 2007 curriculum in their class. Second, the students can develop their hobbies, especially in reading Indonesian novel while learning English. The last significance is it could give contribution to other researchers and whoever is interested in this problem. Meanwhile, theoretical input of the research is that it might give some contribution to the development of the knowledge, especially in language teaching theories.

## 1.9 Research Method

### 1.9.1 Research Method and Design

The method of the research applies quantitative method using correlational study. The correlational study includes an ex-post facto design (Gay, 1987). The design of the research has two quantitative variables. They are reading comprehension of Indonesian fiction as variable X and Writing ability of English narrative text as variable Y. For detail explanation, it can be explored in the section 3.1 and 3.2.

### 1.9.2 Population, Setting, and Sample of the Research.

The population and setting of the research were second grade students in SMA N 2 Bandung. The random sampling was used to take the sample. 42 students of all classes were taken to be a sample of this research. It consists of 21 students as the representative of science class including eleven girls and ten boys

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and the other half as the representative of social class that includes eleven girls and ten boys. Further explanation is presented in the section 3.3.

**1.9.3 Data Collection Method, Data Analysis, and Data Interpretation.**

Data collection method in this research is through the tests. There are two kinds of test to gain the data. They are a reading comprehension test, a writing narrative test. The data is analyzed by using statistical analyses, Pearson Product Moment, in order to measure the strength of the relationship. The Pearson Product Moment is used since the data in the form of interval. The data is calculated by using three kinds of computations. Manual calculation, Microsoft Excel computation, and SPSS version 14.0 calculation. The data can be interpreted after the value of the observed r is consulted to the value of the critical r (r table) at 0.05 level of significance. Data can also be interpreted by using table of interpretation. For more description, it can be explained in the section 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6.

To support the study, there are some ideas, arguments, related literature and research. They will be described detail in the next chapter (Chapter II).