

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an introduction of the research paper which describes background of the research paper, research questions, aims of the study, the scope of the study, significance of the study, and organization of the paper.

#### 1.1 Background

“Writing is the unit of word” (Ferreiro, 1999 in Vernon, Alvarado, & Zermeño, 2004: 3). Writing can also be defined as a process used to express idea without saying or face to face interaction and others can understand the meaning by reading it (Elbow, 2000). Writing is the most difficult skill to master for foreign or second-language learners (Widodo, 2006:1). The difficulties are not only in generating and organizing ideas using an appropriate choice of vocabulary, sentence, and paragraph organization but also to turn such ideas into a readable text (Richards & Renandya, 2002, as cited in Widodo, 2006). That statement is in line with Byrne (1995), who states that many people considered that writing is a difficult activity because the writer has responsibility to make the reader understand. Writing also involves the features such as structures of sentence, sequences, and organizing the idea. In addition, Heaton (1990: 130) demonstrated that writing skill is a more complex and difficult skill to be taught because it required mastery on a grammatical and rhetorical device but also on conceptual and judgment devices. The difficulties include those in (1) generating and organizing ideas using an appropriate choice of

vocabulary, sentence and paragraph organization and (2) putting such ideas into an intelligible text (Richard and Renandya, 2002 cited in Tuan, 2011).

In terms of the importance of writing, writing is one of fundamental skills that should be learned by students in learning English (*Pusat Kurikulum*, 2006). Although the government does not include the writing skill into the final exam, but the syllabus asks the students to write some genres of texts, one of them is descriptive text. Descriptive is a type of text aimed to describe particular person, place, or thing (Knapp and Watkins, 2005). The students use simple present and adjective clause in writing descriptive text (Emilia, 2011).

Surveying 25 students and 3 English teachers of a senior high school in Bandung, the researcher found that descriptive text is the simplest text among 4 texts that should be learned by students in first grade of senior high school. However, although descriptive text is simple, in fact the students were still confused how to write the descriptive text, they were confused how to start to write the paragraph. They also found difficulties on how to translate the sentences and how to make a good paragraph and a good text. In systemic functional grammar, definition of a good text is when the text has some dimension such as cohesion (Eggins, 2004) and coherent (Emilia, 2011).

Departing from those findings, this research is concerned with investigation of students' ability in writing descriptive text and difficulties faced by them in writing this kind of text.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

The study is aimed at investigating the first grade of senior high school students' ability and the difficulties in writing descriptive text. Specifically, this study addresses the following questions:

1. What is the students' ability in writing descriptive text?
2. What are the difficulties faced by the students in writing descriptive text?
3. What kind of processes used by the students in writing descriptive text?

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

Based on the aforementioned background and the research questions, the purposes of this study are:

1. To investigate students' ability in writing descriptive text.
2. To investigate the difficulty faced by the students in writing descriptive text.
3. To investigate kind of processes used by the students in writing descriptive text

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

This study is concerned with the students' ability in writing descriptive text. It is in line with the research questions that have been formulated above. This study specially investigates the relation between students' ability and the difficulty faced by the first grade students of senior high school in writing descriptive text.

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

In this study the researcher expects that the research paper has some benefits both in theory and practice. In term of theoretical benefits, the results of study are expected to enrich the literature in term of the students' writing ability and also give beneficial references for future research on writing ability, especially in term of descriptive text. For the next researchers, the results of study can be used as a contribution of opinion that can be taken as references for another investigation in the same area in different contexts.

Furthermore, in term of practical benefits, the results of study are expected to give some information for both students and teachers in teaching and learning process, especially in writing aspects. For students, the results can be a bridge for the students to encourage them to improve their writing ability. Moreover, For teachers, the results of study can be used as an input to give some benefits for the teachers in term of the difficulties faced by students in order the teacher could help the students to solve the difficulties faced by them in writing descriptive text.

## 1.6 Organization of Paper

This research paper is divided into five chapters. Chapter I is an introduction which covers background, statements of problems, aims of the study, significance of the study, the scope of the research and organization of the paper entitled Students' ability in writing descriptive texts are also presented.

Chapter II focuses on the theoretical foundation from the experts and previous researchers as the foundation of research investigation regarding writing descriptive text applied by first grade students of senior high school.

Chapter III explains about the research methodology employed in investigating the students' ability in writing descriptive texts. It explains the methodology of the study focuses on research design, subject of the study, data collection procedure, data analysis, and limitations of the study.

Chapter IV covers the finding and discussion of the study regarding students' ability in writing descriptive texts. In answering the proposed research questions, the presentation is organized based on the question. Thus, the first section addresses the students' ability in writing descriptive texts from students' texts, interview and observation. On the other hand, the second part of the chapter presents and discusses the difficulty faced by the students in writing descriptive texts from those three data collection procedures: students' texts, interview and classroom observation.

Chapter V explores the interpretation of the study results in a form of conclusions and suggestions concerning strategies to write descriptive text and strategies to gain comprehension applied by Indonesian language learners in their English writing.

