CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background to the study and some basic reasons for investigating the students' writing; the schematic structure, using appropriate language features, and employing appropriate writing strategies in analytical exposition text. It also incorporates the next sections which simultaneously discusses about the purposes of the study, the research questions, the significance of the study, the definition of the key terms, and the organization of this thesis.

1.1 Introduction

The study about writing as a foreign language seems left behind compared with the study English as a second language. As English as a Second Language teaching develops more and more rapidly, an increasing number of linguists pay attention to research in the field of ESL writing strategies. They seek to develop an inventory of writing strategies and pedagogically use it as a guide in ESL writing to help students to improve their writing abilities (Wenyu & Yang, 2008).

Moreover, applied linguistics has been concerned with the development of writing skills for at least the past 50 years (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996: 1). There are at least three research approaches to writing with specific focuses; on the writing as a product, on the one as a process, and on the readers' roles (Hyland, 2002: 5). However, novice writers seem to find difficulties in writing. One of the problems

is that they lack sufficient knowledge about writing strategies and writing skills (Tompkins, 2008: 57).

Writing strategies, according to Tompkins (2008), are problem-solving behaviors that writers use thoughtfully and consciously. Furthermore, Tompkins states that writing strategies are 'deliberate thinking procedures which writers use to solve problems that they encounter while writing' (Collins, 1998 in Tompkins, 2008: 57). Even strategic writers commonly take a conscious and deliberate control of the writing process by applying several procedures. They select and use appropriate strategies, organize ideas for writing, monitor the development of their compositions, and revise their meaning as they refine their writing (Lewin, 1992; Paris & Jacob, 1984; Schmitt, 1990 in Tompkins, 2008: 57).

In teaching context of writing for Indonesian students, writing strategy may become a breakthrough for students in senior high schools to improve their writing competency. According to Graham (2006) that teaching adolescents the writing strategies appears to show a dramatic effect on the quality of students' writing. Such writing strategy instruction involves explicit and systematic teaching steps necessary for planning, revising, and/or editing text. In addition, the ultimate goal of teaching writing strategies is to teach students how to use these strategies independently. Instead, teaching the writing strategy seems to be found effective for adolescents who have difficulties in writing process, and it is also a powerful technique for adolescents in general (Graham and Perin, 2007: 15).

This study is an investigation of the writing strategies of the students of senior high school in the process of writing analytical exposition text in English as a foreign language. The writing strategies refers to the efforts of the students of senior high school in writing in which they employ some writing strategies such as metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, rhetorical strategies and affective/social strategies following what Mu and Carrington (2007) studied to the three Chinese students in writing strategies. Through the writing process, the students work conciously with their strategies such as planning, generating, organizing, drafting, revising, editing, and keeping high motivation and confidence with their writing. Instead, this study specifically identify the schematic structure and find out whether the students use appropriate language features in the texts.

A previous study on writing strategies was conducted by Torrance, et.al. (1989) involving the participants Graduate Research Students in Social Sciences. In that research, cluster analysis was used to identify three distinct groups of students in terms of writing strategies. Based on the strategies, then the students were grouped into "Planners", Revisers", and "Mixed Strategy" writers. It is found that working from a plan can be an effective strategy for some, but that planning is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for writing success. Subsequently, it can be inferred that planning does not constitute a single determinant factor in successful writing, but successful writing may involve some other aspects of writing strategies.

In line with the relevance to the English teaching in Indonesia, the present study is an endeavour to reveal the students writing correctly the schematic structure, to find out appropriate language features of analytical exposition text the students use, and what writing strategies the students employ during the writing processes.

Moreover, this study takes analytical exposition texts written by students in a senior high school as suggested by School-based Curriculum (2006). In such text, some writing aspects may have an overt contributive descriptions of students' writing strategies, besides the ones revealed through observation and questionnaire. Another supporting reason of taking the text is that the expository texts provide students the ways of building knowledge of language use in written texts.

Regarding the research purposes and the investigation for the research problems, the present study employs some data collection techniques, i.e. questionnaire, observations, and collecting the texts as writing product. The texts are then analysed by identifying the schematic structure, the use of appropriate language features and classifying the writing strategies used by the students. These steps are intended to achieve the following purposes.

1.2 The Purposes of the Study

Based on those perspectives above, this present study has the following aims:

1. To identify the schematic structure in the students' written text.

2. To find out whether the students apply the appropriate language features in analytical exposition texts.

3. To reveal the writing strategies employed by students in writing analytical exposition texts.

1.3 Research Questions

This study aims to address the following research questions as follows:

1. Do the students write correctly the schematic structure of analytical exposition texts?

2. Do the students apply appropriate language features in their analytical exposition texts?

3. What writing strategies do the students employ in writing analytical exposition texts?

1.4 The Significance of the Study

The result of this study will be of great contribution to the following aspects; the theory, practice, and profession. Firstly, for theoretical aspect, it is hoped that these findings can give a contributive element for great theories of teaching writing in Indoensia.

Secondly, for the practice aspect, the students are able to write well the schematic structure and use the language features of analytical exposition text. Then, the students can consider the strategies to help themselves to develop their writing ability.

Finally, for profession aspect, especially for teachers, these findings can be valuable as a refference in developing the teaching writing in English class.

1.5 Definiton of Key Terms

Definition key terms in the present study are as follows. **Analytical Exposition Text** is a kind of text which aims at convincing readers to the case in certain issue. Therefore, this text generally has an issue, a series of arguments, and conclusion or reorientation. The students of senior high schools commonly use it in English language learning, or other writing classes.

Writing process refers to several activities which students do in the process of writing. It consists of planning, writing, editing and publishing stages. It involves several activities; thinking, gathering, synthesising and organising, drafting, revising, and editing up to the final version of the writing.

Writing Strategies refers to problem-solving behaviors which writers use thoughtfully and consciously; they are 'deliberate thinking procedures to solve problems in writing process'. They are in forms of 'specific actions taken by learners to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations'. The strategies may also in the forms of memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social (Griffifths, 2008: 84).

1.6 The Organization of this Thesis

This thesis is organised into five chapters, i.e. Introduction, Review of Related Literature, Research Method, Findings and Discussions, and Conclusion. Each chapter presents different topics and it goes into more detail sub-chapters with their specific discussions in such trackable way that readers will be able to follow the discussion easily. The following description is a detailed content of every respective chapters.

Chapter I, the Introduction, includes the background of this study, research on writing strategies, and teaching writing in Indonesian contexts. This chapter also includes the purposes of the study, the research questions, the significance of the study and the organization of the thesis as the preliminary introduction for the readers.

Chapter II, the Review of Related Literature, has primary three sections, i.e. An Overview of Analytical Exposition Text, Process of Writing, and Writing Strategies. The first section contains writing analytical exposition texts, with the focal discussion on schematic structure and the use of appropriate language features. The following section is the writing processes, i.e. prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. The last section is the writing strategies which include the strategies on how the students produce the written texts.

Chapter III presents the research method, as a report how the study was conducted. This chapter consists of sub-chapters; restatement of the research questions, research design, research site and participants, data collection, and data analysis techniques. This study is designed to deeply explore the participants'

actions, knowledge and skills in writing. This chapter also explains some consideration for the selection of research site and participants, the data collection techniques and analysis.

Chapter IV provides the data presentation and analysis, findings, and discussions. The chapter sections are divided into three, i.e. the schematic structure, language features, and writing strategies in writing processes. Therefore, there are data analysis, the findings, and the discussion in every section simultaneously.

Chapter V deals with the conclusions and recommendations. This chapter reminds the readers by presenting a brief description of the background of the study, the research questions, the main findings and conclusions. At the end of this chapter, some recomendations are proposed for the improvement of future research, particluarly on similar topics for other researchers. Then, there is also educational implication for teachers and students in writing English as a foreign language in Indonesia context.