

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

This chapter consists of background of the study. It is also followed by identification of the problem, delimitation of the problem, research questions, and objective of the research. In the end of chapter is significance of the research.

#### **Background of the Research**

English is the one most frequently used (Smith, 2003). Although it is not universal, it is the principal language used in international commerce, shipping, popular music, and sports. It is of the main reasons why English must be mastered correctly not only in a form of oral communication. Writing has also become the medium in the transfer of information. Therefore, nonnative users of English who are forced to be competent in this skill. Writing is a form of indirect way of transferring information, so misinterpretation of information should be avoided.

Writing is a skill in language production. Its significance increases when it comes to writing in English language which is extensively used for global mediation of knowledge (Smith, 2003). Therefore, performance in language development depends on the improvement in writing skills. However, a writer tends to be demanded to compose a text that must be cohesive, logical, clearly structured, interesting and properly organized with a wide range of vocabulary and mastery of mechanics.

Writing is considered one of the most difficult language skills to be acquired but also taught (Klimova, 2014). In fact, it has been one of the most used forms of communication, so its importance cannot be avoided. However, it is believed to be difficult in writing practice. When dealing with a foreign language as a medium of the writing, the acquisition of academic vocabulary and discourse style is another challenge to face. According to cognitive

theory, communicating in writing is an active process of skill development and gradual elimination of errors as the learner internalizes the language. Acquisition is usually a product of the complex interaction of the linguistic environment and the learner's internal mechanisms (Klimova, 2014).

As it is closely related to cognition as aforementioned, to succeed in writing a writer must master the skills of writing itself (Karimnia, 2013). The knowledge about what to write needs a requirement to be fulfilled by the writer. Therefore, many obstacles faced by writers in composing a text includes that they lack materials to be written in their writing. In addition, they present inadequate knowledge about the language used, for instance, English. It is considered as the weak points of being in a non-English-speaking environment.

It is already mentioned that the function of written language is, among others, to convey information and to get information (Stapa, Maasum, & Aziz, 2014). Mostly, people write for a purpose. Therefore, to write a *skripsi*, for example, students must understand that the messages conveyed in the writing must follow some structures that have been agreed by the institution, such as the faculty management. The rules are adjusted to the science that is learned by the students in the study program, namely English Language Education Department in this case. Therefore, the ability to write a text with clarity and conforming to the rules of the idea conveyed would take time to learn. It is what usually happens in the realm of academic situation.

Academic writing, in this term as a subject matter, comes easily for those who consider writing an enjoyable task (Burgess, & Pallant, 2013). In contrast, novice academic writers may find it difficult although they have taken a major of language. The English as a language of academic publication has meant that increasing numbers of people face not only the challenge of producing academic text, but of having to produce it in a language which is

for them an additional language used primarily for international communication. This situation also takes place in English Language Education Department (ELED) at a private university in Yogyakarta that in the end of their study, all students must work in a project called *skripsi*.

A *skripsi* is a scientific paper as a result of field research or literature study compiled by students according to their field of study. They then have to write them in the order of chapters in accordance with the rules of writing a *skripsi* that apply at their university. Doing a *skripsi* is closely related to writing. In this writing activity, students also have to look for references and convey ideas. This activity looks easy, but many students actually have difficulty in the process of making it.

Having struggled to come to terms with the demands of academic writing not in their first language, students of English Language Education Department must report the findings of their research in English. The challenge they face is, among others, not just the needed proficiency in English but of appreciating rhetorical differences that may exist between their own language culture and that of English. It should be understood how to express content in English in accordance with, for example, the implicit norms of writers for whom English is not their first language. Academic writing, in this case a *skripsi*, presents such a challenge. Therefore, this research attempts to explore the problems of writing a *skripsi* experienced by students of ELED in a private university in Yogyakarta.

### **Identification of the Problem**

Before completing their study program in a particular field of science, prospective bachelors need to write a scientific paper in the form of a graduating paper or *skripsi*. This is necessary and required by almost all universities. Many undergraduate students do not understand the philosophy behind it all. Some of them complained that the work of writing a

*skripsi* is considered a boring job and only a waste of time. Some argue that students should be required to make real works. Students as academics will be considered as contributing to science when they write a *skripsi*. The scientific paper must be written referring to the results of the research, not in the form of free writing. A good scientific work must have a level of originality or new findings so that it can enrich science.

The second reason is that when students have been able to write scientific papers and are able to be held accountable in scientific examinations by a team of examiners who are experts in their fields. This shows that the student are competent in their scientific field. Their studies in certain fields of science can be declared completed and formally tested.

Students of English Language Education Department, however, must write a *skripsi* written in English. This therefore presents a challenge since the competency of all English students is variable. The challenge is mostly because English is not language that is used in daily life. Therefore, the students who learn English will find it difficult to apply it in real life. When they need to write, for example, the language they are unfamiliar with, they will find many impediments and obstructions. This can be considered another challenge for them. Therefore, the problem identified in this current research is the problems in writing a *skripsi* in English by English Language Education Department students in a private university in Yogyakarta.

### **Delimitation of the Problem**

This research only focuses on investigating students' problems in writing *skripsi*. The researcher will research about *skripsi* that written by English Language Education Department in only one private university in Yogyakarta. The topic is only the challenges that faced by students. The researcher will not try to find strategies that students use in facing the problems. To get the data, researcher will interview the participants in this study.

## **Research Questions**

In relation to this current research, the research question is ‘what are the problems in writing a *skripsi* faced by English Education Department students?’

## **Objective of the Research**

This research aims to determine the problems faced by students of English Language Education Department students when they are writing *skripsi*.

## **Significance of the Study**

The benefits of this research are expected to describe the things obtained after a research objective has been fulfilled. The significance can be broken down based on the area of students, teachers and other researchers.

**Students.** Students, especially in the lower study year or semesters, are aware of the problems in writing a *skripsi* so that they can make preparation long before its composition.

**Teachers.** Writing skills teachers can apply the findings in current research as teaching materials to provide solutions that the difficulties that students might face in writing a *skripsi* are expected to be solved easily in the future.

**The other researchers.** The result of this study can be one of considerable reference to other researchers to conduct similar research using a similar topic.