

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter presents: (1) the nature of writing, (2) academic writing, (3) writing research proposal, (4) the difficulties in writing research proposal, (5) the factors of difficulties in writing research proposal, and (6) previous related studies.

#### **2.1. The Nature of Writing**

Writing is a way of communicating information, ideas, and feelings to others by reproducing the thoughts, ideas, and feelings in written symbols. The writer can express his/her thoughts or ideas on the paper. According to Alidmat and Ayassrah (2017) found “the productive nature of writing can be challenging if tasks are not well thought out because writing involves discovering how to find the most effective way for communicating ideas” (p. 83). Meanwhile, Suheniati (2017) argued that writing is a difficult activity for students, which is involves many skills. It is frustrating to discover how difficult it is to transfer thoughts and feelings from one’s head into a piece of paper. It means that writing is a process to transfer the main idea from the brain, makes the supporting idea and to express issues, events, feeling or thinking from words, phrases, sentences, to paragraph in written form.

In English writing, there are number of features to make effective writing, those are focus on the topic, organization how to develop the

beginning, middle and end of the writing, support and elaboration of the idea, style which also means the appropriate language use to the purpose of writing, audience and context of the writing, conventions or the correctness of the sentence formation, usage, and mechanics (Harmer & Jeremy, 2007). Therefore, before starting to write, a writer as primary stage needs to give deep thoughts to the purpose of writing, which will justify later on the use of language, the information they require, and how to develop and organize them in their writing.

## **2.2. Academic Writing**

Writing is one of a skill in education, and it is used to be called as academic writing. Academic writing is a special genre of writing that prescribes its own set of rules and practices (Bowker, 2007, p. 3). Furthermore, Abu-Ghararah and Hamzah (as cited in Al-Badi, 2015) described that academic writing as the logical organization and arrangement of the written sentences within a paragraph and paragraphs within the units of discourse and the expression of the ideas. Oshima and Hogue (2007, p. 3) added that academic writing is formal, so the writer should not use slang or contractions. In addition, the writer should take care to write complete sentences and to organize them in a certain way. Therefore, it can be concluded that academic writing could be a complex process. It involves a

variety of aspects that are believed to be the base of successful academic writing.

Academic writing is one of the cornerstones of university study. However, academic writing can come in many forms and you may be asked to write an essay, a report or even a reflective journal article (Swarni, 2016, p. 4). Furthermore, this study will focus in writing research proposal as one kinds of academic writing.

### **2.3. Writing Research Proposal**

In education especially at tertiary level, writing research proposal is important, because research proposal is like the introduction of thesis where thesis is the main requirements to be a graduate. Before doing writing a thesis, students are required to start with a research proposal. Research proposal is as one of academic text which serves several purposes. It is in line with Kheryadi (2017), he has been ever explained that a research proposal is the first step in producing a graduation thesis and intends to convince a supervisor or academic committee that the students' topic and approach are sound, so that they gain approval to proceed with the actual research and write their graduation thesis.

Furthermore, in writing research proposal, the students also learn how to access, select and evaluate information from different sources and to formulate ideas (Anderson and Poole, 2001, p.4). In other words, writing

research proposal is arguably the most important language skill to English tertiary students whose grades are largely determined by their performance in written assignment, academic reports, term examination and graduation thesis.

#### **2.4. The Difficulties in Writing Research Proposal**

In writing thesis or even writing research proposal, many undergraduate students face some problem in writing their research. And this is corroborated by the statement of Grami (2010, p. 9) that writing could be a difficult skill to be learnt or taught due to the fact that it is not a simple cognitive activity rather it is believed to be a complex mental production which requires careful thought, discipline and concentration. Furthermore, Kheryadi (2017) stated that there is a need to increase research-based knowledge of students' ability and problems in writing research proposal since the researcher has found that in the research site, many students find it is difficult to write a research proposal.

On the other hand, Dwihandini, Marhaeni and Suarnajaya (2013) explained that in writing thesis, many undergraduate students have some vary factors of the difficulties they face, and they are the ideas, structure, lack of vocabularies, and rewrite or paraphrase are some examples of the difficulties in writing thesis that the students commonly face. In other words, in writing research proposal, students should think not only about the content

and organization of the thesis but also the language in order to write the research proposal well and make it become a good thesis.

However, Puspita (2019) has been said that there is yet further researcher about other factors of acquiring second language as the basic factors to be analyzed by researcher. For second language learner in specific, the factors of the difficulties in acquiring second language may also encounter them difficult to write a research. Thus, in this study, the factors raised by Brown as explained as follow: Personality factor such as self-esteem, inhibition, risk taking, anxiety, empathy, extroversion and motivation; and then from sociocultural factors that might also be defined as the ideas, customs, skills, arts, and tools that characterize a given group of people in a given period of time; and also from linguistic factors that might be consider of contrasts between native and target language and the effect of the first language on a second.

## **2.5. The Factors of Difficulties in Writing Research Proposal**

Based on the explanation above, the factors of difficulties in writing research proposal to be underlined are the factors raised by Brown (2007, p. 86-278) as explained as follows:

### **2.5.1. Psychological Factors**

The factors related to the writer's internal factors can also be known as the psychological factors. Brown (2007, p. 153) believed that

the psychological factors of students can be identified from the affective factors of the students. Further, Brown (2007, p. 154-174) explained that the affective factors -which becomes the psychological factors that will affect the undergraduate students in order to create a good thesis writing- are (1) Self-Esteem; (2) attribution theory and self-efficacy; (3) Willingness to communicate; (4) Inhibition; (5) Risk Taking; (6) Anxiety; (7) Emphaty; (8) Extroversion; and (9) Motivation.

All of the psychological factors mentioned above will affect the decision of a learner to create the objective of a research, the data for the research, findings of the research, and the whole research based on the proved ratio.

### **2.5.2. Sociocultural Factors**

Since language cannot be separated away from the culture, so, it is also important to analyze the difficulties in writing thesis through the eyes of the sociocultural factors. As Brown (2007, p. 189) claimed that culture becomes strongly important in the learning of a second language. Therefore, the focus factor on sociocultural factors that will be arisen in this study of the difficulties in writing thesis are bold in three aspects, such as (1) the social distance among each undergraduate students, and the relationship between undergraduate students and their tutor.; (2) the culture in the language classroom of the undergraduate students, and; (3) the communicative competence among each

undergraduate students, and the communicative competence between undergraduate students and their tutor.

### **2.5.3. Linguistic Factors**

Brown (2007, p. 262-263) classified four categories to describe the errors in second language learner production data. Browns' first overview is to identify errors by addition, omission, substitution and ordering. Second category as Brown believes to identify the errors is put in the student levels of language (phonology, lexicon, grammar and discourse) that should be considered. Third, Errors can be also analyzed by the global errors or local errors as explained by Brown (2007, p. 263) quoted from Burt and Kiparsky in 1972. Finally, as Lennon in 1991 quoted by Brown (2007, p. 263) suggests identifying errors by considering the two related dimensions of error, such as domain and extent. Brown have been ever explained domain is the rank of linguistic unit (from phoneme to discourse) that must be taken as context in order for error to become apparent, and extent is the rank of linguistic unit that would have to be deleted, replaced, supplied or reordered in order to repair the sentence.

In the context of the analysis of the factors of student difficulties in thesis writing, Lenbons' overview about two related dimensions of error will be used to research the linguistics factors affecting undergraduate students in writing their thesis.

## **2.6. Previous Related Studies**

There are related studies, which has been done by the other researchers. Swarni (2016), conducted a study entitled “Student’s problem in writing thesis: Case study at English department Mataram University”. This study aimed to find the factors of the student’s problem in writing their thesis and the causes of their problems. The subjects of this study were 15 students in English department of Mataram University academic year 2011/2012 noon class. In collecting the data, the writer applied two instrument, questionnaire and interview. The data were collected by using questionnaire with 22 items designed on five point like type scale to capture students’ opinion about their problems in writing their thesis. Descriptive quantitative design was used in this research. The result of analysis shown that most of students faced problems in 5 kinds of problems; They are in writing introduction chapter, writing review literature chapter, writing methodology chapter, writing result chapter and writing conclusion chapter.

Furthermore, there is a research which was constructed Kheryadi (2017), conducted a research under the title “The student’s ability and problems in writing introduction of research proposal”. This study aimed to investigate the students’ ability and problems in writing introduction section of research proposal. This study has been conducted in an undergraduate English study program a University in Banten. The documentation/selection of students’ research proposal was conducted by choosing nine students’

research proposals from fifty-seven students to represent different levels of achievement. It uses text analysis and in-depth interview to investigate the students' performance in writing a research proposal. These findings implicate that most students faced difficulties in presenting arguments in terms of justifications. Second, most students were not aware that there are standard models in writing a research proposal, especially in terms of its elements and linguistic features, which are widely accepted in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). This study supports the extensive research into academic writing that emphasizes the importance of explicit teaching of the structure of specific written genres, particularly a research proposal, to second-language students.

Another study was conducted by Widiastuti (2010) entitled "The Students' ability and problems in writing a research proposal" reveals three findings related to the research questions. First, despite their ability in the discourse semantic level, most students still have problems in achieving the communicative purpose of each major element in a research proposal. Second, the main causes of the problems are the students' unfamiliarity and lack of knowledge in terms of the elements and linguistic features required in a research proposal. Finally, the solutions that can be proposed to solve the students' problems are guidance, assistance, and explicit teaching for the students in writing the elements and linguistic features of a research proposal.