

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, theoretical framework, the significance of the study, the assumption, the scope and limitation of the study, and the definition of key term.

1.1 Background of the Study

In studying English at schools and universities, many students nowadays complain that they cannot follow the lessons that are given by their teachers. It is true that they sit in the classroom, join every lesson, and listen to their teachers, but they are not able to absorb all the information of the lessons. It can be proved by looking at their mark or grade at school. The students who get low mark or grade have their own reasons why it happens to them. Some of them complain that they cannot follow their teachers when they are explaining the lessons in front of the class. The students consider that they explain the lessons too fast. Some others also complain that when there is an exam, they cannot memorize all the information in their textbook because there is too much information contained in their textbook. Other students even have a reason that they do not know what to memorize from their book since they don't know which part is very important and which part is not important.

To overcome these problems, many teachers suggest that their students make notes every time they join a lesson. They are required to have a record in their notebook every time the teacher is explaining the lesson, and every time they are reading a book. When they have to read a book, they have to jot down important parts that they should remember from the book. Therefore, they need to make a kind of summary of the information they have already got.

From those phenomena, it seems that it is a good idea if the students have to make a summary from the teachers' explanation or from the textbook. According to Behrens (1987:36) a summary is "a brief restatement (in our own words) of the contents of a piece of writing. It can be a paragraph, a group of paragraphs, a chapter, an article, or even a book." In other words, summarizing is a way to condense a written work into one written work using his or her own words. However, many students do not know how to make a good summary that has essential, short, and dense content that can be memorized easily. Many of them only make a summary, which is short since they only know that it is the only nature of a summary. The teachers never teach them strategies to make a good summary either. Therefore, they do not know exactly what should be and shouldn't be included in a summary.

There are some types of techniques that are needed to help a writer to produce a good writing as the result of understanding the reading material. They are summarizing, quoting, and paraphrasing. However, for college or university students, summarizing as an important writing skill is a crucial ability they can possess. It is an important part of note taking, too. It is very needed when they

study inside or outside the classroom. It is because they often get assignments to summarize an article or a book additionally, this technique can help them to cover the material when they are reviewing the lesson for a test.

In line with this, Picket and Laster (1975:149) question, “Why do students need to know how to make a summary? It is because they are students.” As students, they should be able to make a summary orally and in writing. It means that they should be able to grasp the main points in a reading assignment of a course. One very effective way of studying textbook materials is to write down the significant points, the important facts, in the lesson. Writing the summaries of teaching learning materials and textbook helps to clarify information and makes it memorable in such a long time. This practice is very helpful especially in reviewing for tests. Taking the main points and ideas from page to page of textbook materials and class notes, and then writing them down coherently and understandably is a method to study for tests. Since tests cannot possibly cover everything a student is supposed to learn in a course, test questions usually emphasize on major points of the subjects. Often a class requirement is to make a report or a summary of reading assignments. Usually the only directions that are given have to do with what sources are to be read and how long the report should be. It is very rare that the students are told how the report should be presented.

From the explanation above, actually there are two advantages that can be taken by writing a summary. First, while writing, someone is unconsciously learning or absorbing the information. The second one, it helps someone to review

the lesson in a shorter time. Thus, for very practical reasons of immediate importance, students need to know how to make a summary.

In summarizing a text or reading passage, there is one thing that should be remembered, that is the existence and the use of schemata. Schemata make reading crucial and needed as a way to store and provide information for someone to write. By using their experience as the readers, people can get information that can be used to activate their background knowledge that is schemata to create new composition.

In line with this, Reid (1993:64) says that good writers often read and good readers often outline, summarize, respond to, and synthesize their reading. By summarizing, someone can read a lot to get much information, relate the information that she or he has already got with the background knowledge that she or he has and later on, develops it. She or he can also learn about coherence since the writer's composition is already coherent and grammatically correct.

Besides, The Writing Center Handouts of Columbia University states that by summarizing, students will have "a good study skill," that enables them to learn how to identify key points (how to discriminate, how to decide what is important and what is not), and taking note of them, will help them improve their critical thinking skills.

The sensitivity to grasp the importance and the unimportance main ideas is crucial to fulfill one of the natures of a summary, which should be short. Shortening a reading material means, they have to cut some information, which are the least important. Other information, which are only details or examples and

additional opinion should also be omitted. This is in accordance with what the theory of macro structure states. Van Dijk (1977:139) says that a conceptual structure can be a topic of a discourse if it hierarchically organizes a conceptual structure of a sequence. It means that a topic sentence must be supported by related and important ideas to construct a sequence.

Considering how important writing a summary is, the writer decided to conduct a study that has relation between reading skill and writing skill. The writer uses a text to be summarized by the students. The writer chooses narrative and descriptive text as the material to be given to the students because it is the simplest and the most popular media that the students usually deal with in the classroom. Moreover, it is the most suitable reading material form to be summarized compared with other reading material form such as song lyric, or even poetry. The text used should not be too long or too short, has the same level of difficulty as those they usually get in their classroom, and attractive so that it will make the students at ease in writing their summary.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Summarizing ability is very important for students especially university or college students to possess and develop in order to deal with the reading text or teachers' explanation in the classroom. The students themselves, especially university students of reading and writing class, often have a kind of summary writing assignment, but they are never taught about the guidelines or the steps to have good strategies in writing a good summary. In conducting this study,

the writer would like to explore summarization strategies used by the university students of semester two. Therefore, this study is done to answer the research question, “What summarization strategies are used in the summaries of English narrative and descriptive texts?”

1.3 Objective of the Study

This study is conducted to find the answer of the research question above, that is to explore the summarization strategies that are used in the summaries of English narrative and descriptive texts by the second semester students of the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya.

1.4 Theoritical Framework

Theory of Schemata and Theory of Macro Structure

In writing, there is one thing that should be realized that is “when someone writes, he or she also makes use of his or her knowledge of the world and of his or her experience as a reader” (Lopes, 1991:42) This is what is known as schemata. According to Rumelhart (1980:34) as quoted by Haryanti (1989) schema is “a theory about knowledge is represented and about how that representation facilitates the use of the knowledge in particular ways.” By means of schemata (the plural of schema), someone can take a part in the communication by sharing his or her ideas in the written form. A way to stimulate schemata is to read information as much as possible. Then, by relating the information that he or

she has got from reading with the schemata in his or her mind, he or she will be able to write down his or her ideas on to the paper.

In summarizing a reading passage, schemata are very necessary to be used in order to produce a good summary writing. Lester (1995) says that to summarize is to put the main idea(s) into your own words, including the main point(s). However, it is significantly shorter than the original and takes a broad overview of the source material. It implies that in summarizing a composition, the students should read and understand the reading material well. Then, using their own words, restate the main points that they have already read more shortly than the original passage.

Besides schemata is important to restate the main ideas from an original text into a summary, schemata is also used to grasp and determine which main ideas are important and which ones are not important. This is in line with what is stated on the theory of Macro Structure. As what Van Dijk (1977: 136) says in his book about macro structure theory that the topic of discourse must be entailed by the sequence of propositions as a whole. In the writer's study, that theory will help her to identify the ideas from the texts whether they are crucial enough to the topic of sequence. The ideas should be analyzed whether all of them have the same topic or not because all the propositions in a sequence must have the same topic in order to become a good discourse. The problem is, the two texts that are used to take the data in this study are not completely correct in term of the construction of ideas to the topic of selection. Not all ideas have the same topic of sequence in the text. Therefore, by assigning the students to write a summary, the

writer analyzes the students' strategies, whether they preserve ideas in the texts, which are important and supportive to the major idea of the selection, or delete ideas which are not important for supporting the major idea of the selection.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

Since there is no previous study, which analyzes the summary's strategies, this study becomes the pioneer one conducted by the student of the English Department of Widya Mandala University Surabaya, which explores about that matter. The result of this study is expected to assist the students in order to improve their skill in summarizing English texts by knowing, learning, and using good summarization strategies that are got through the steps of writing summaries. Additionally, the strategies of summarizing can contribute a variation for teaching special kind of writing, since students are not yet familiar with the strategies.

1.6 The Assumption

In conducting this research study, the students are assumed that their comprehension about the two types of text, narrative and descriptive text, is quite good. It is based on the fact that both narration and description are considered as the most popular types of writing that they have already learnt since they were in the first grade of junior high school. Moreover, narrative and descriptive text, which were given to them, were suitable with the texts that they usually read from

their reading textbook I and writing textbook I in terms of the grammar and vocabulary difficulties level.

1.7 The Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study is focused on the summarization strategies used in the summaries of English narrative and descriptive texts by the second semester of university students. It has been done in order that the result of this study can help the students to improve their skill in summarizing. The writer would like to limit this study into several points. They are:

1. This study is only dealing with summarization strategies that are used in the summaries of English narrative and descriptive texts. Since writing a summary is not the same as writing a composition, there are some elements in the texts that should preserve and delete in writing a summary.
2. The subjects of this study are the second semester students of the English Department of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya, academic year 2005/2006. The writer only takes three classes: two reading I classes and one writing I class.
3. The study is conducted by assigning the students to summarize two different texts to explore the summarization strategies that are used in the summaries of English narrative and descriptive texts.
4. The texts in this study are in the form of narration and description taken from the published books. The writer chooses narration and description

because they are the most popular types of writing and the students are familiar with these types of writing.

1.8 The Definition of the Key Term

To avoid any misinterpretations, the important terms in this thesis are defined as follows:

1. Summarization Strategies

Summarizing is “A way to condense information from a source, perhaps capsulizing a chapter in a short paragraph or a paragraph in a single sentence” (Hacker, 1989 : 170). Strategy is “A plan of action designed for a particular purpose (WWW. Wikipedia. Org). In accordance with this study, summarization strategies means the students’ plans of actions, or ways, which are used to summarize the original text, by means of preservation, deletion, paraphrase, and verbatim.

2. Preservation

Preservation is “An activity to keep something in its original state or in a good condition” (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 1995). In accordance with this study, preservation is a strategy that is used in summarization to keep main ideas, details, and other elements contained in a text.

3. Deletion

Deletion is “An activity to remove or deliberately omit something written or printed” (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 1995). In accordance with

this study, deletion is a strategy that is used in summarization to remove or omit main ideas, details, and other elements contained in a text.

4. Paraphrase

Paraphrase is “An expression of the meaning of something written or said, using different words, especially in order to make it easier” (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 1995)

However, paraphrase is not merely expressed in different words, but also in different sentence structure since if it is only expressed by having the same sentence structure, substituting and omitting few words, it is still cannot be called as a paraphrase (Day, McMahan, & Funk, 1995)

In accordance with this study, paraphrase is a strategy that is used in summarization to keep the ideas from the original text by using different words and sentence structure.

5. Verbatim

Verbatim is “An expression of the meaning of something which is exactly the same as what is spoken or written, word by word” ” (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 1995). In accordance with this study, verbatim is a strategy that is used in summarization to keep the ideas from the original text by using exactly the same words.

6. Narrative Text

Text is “The original written or printed words and form of literary works.” (Webster’s Third New International Dictionary : 1986). In accordance with

this study, the narrative text means the original printed words, which presents the chronological pattern on a sequence of a story.

7. Descriptive text

Based on the definition of “text”, descriptive text in this study means the original printed words, which presents a picture, shows the reader how something looks, feels, tastes, or what it sounds like to describe.

1.9 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction that is including background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, assumption, significance of the study, the scope and limitation, theoretical framework, definition of the key term, and organization of the thesis. The second chapter is concerned with the theories that become the basic foundation of this study, that are the schemata and the macro structure theory. The third chapter discusses the research method. The fourth chapter is about the data analysis and findings. The last chapter presents the conclusion and the suggestions of this study.