

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **1.1. Background of the Problem**

There are four language skills that students should master. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening and Speaking are two skills which are highly interrelated and work simultaneously in real life situations while Reading and Writing are tools for achieving an effective written communication (Sadiku, 2015). By honing listening and speaking skills, students' oral communication becomes effective and directed. The ability to read and write must also be honed by reading. If these four skills are well trained and honed, students become good listeners, speakers, readers, and also writers.

One of the four main skills that should be mastered by students is writing. Writing is an important skill for career and academic life. In career life, people write to convey a message and express what they are feeling through their writing. Expressing ideas or information in writing can be a job for many people. Some examples of fieldworks which require writing skills are bloggers, book reviewers, catalog copywriters, copyeditors, novelists, and many others (Bly, 2009). Because of writing, people can make money. Career writing has much in common with other qualitative career assessment approaches in that it aims to help uncover what is emotionally salient to an individual (i.e., identify life themes) and assists people in co-constructing a narrative useful for navigating the world of work (Lengelle & Meijers, 2015). Bly (2009, p. 33) claims that businesses are increasingly aware of the need to create and maintain blogs, which has created an exciting new opportunity for writers. Bloggers can make money from both space on their blogs, and by blogging for businesses. As a blogger, people can earn an income \$2–\$10 per blog post when employed by a professional blogging company.

In academic life, students need writing as a part of their life. Students do a lot of writing for assignments and even final project. The genres of academic writing include essays, research papers, case study, literature review, project report, proposals and dissertation/ thesis (*Writing for Academic and Professional Success*, 2017).

For applying overseas scholarship, people need to make and write an essay. Most international students need to write essays and reports for exams and coursework (Bailey, 2011). EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students are prepared and expected to be able to write good EFL academic papers (Harjanto, 2014). The ESL or EFL students should master the writing skills to prepare themselves so that they can compete in this era.

Students sometimes think that writing is difficult. Friedlander (1990) said writing a composition in English as a second language is often a challenging task for the students (as cited in Kristanti, 2013). Students quite often make mistakes in their writing. Students sometimes lack rigor and are wrong in choosing the right words for their writing. Furthermore, Harjanto (2014) stated that EFL graduate students still experience difficulties in grammar rules, idea development, referencing skills, and rhetoric.

Teachers' written feedback can help students to reduce the level of mistakes and also help students write better. Purwanti (2013, p. 2) said, from feedback, a teacher can detect flaws in students' performance. Moreover, a teacher can also identify students' talent and potential by giving feedback. Teachers' written feedback can help students to improve their writing. Students also get positive advantage from teachers' feedback.

Wen (2013) found the following:

Students are motivated to continue a series of revisions especially through positive feedback. Hence, it is feedback that drives the writer polishing their drafts again and again to bring expression closer and closer to intention in successive drafts and eventually accomplish the final end-product. (p.427)

Knowing the students' perception of the teachers' written feedback is needed. Studies on the students' perception of teachers' written feedback to improve writing skills have been done by many experts. Zhan (2016) found that students get positive benefit from the teachers' written feedback. In her research, Leng (2014) found that written feedback from teacher was helpful and useful for students. Research conducted by Rosdiana (2014) found that in improving students' writing skills, it is necessary to receive teachers' feedback on written work.

In this study, the instruments used were questionnaires and interviews. The subjects of this study were 40 students of Widya Mandala Catholic University Surabaya majoring in English Education who are currently in the fourth semester. Knowing the student's perception about teachers' written feedback can help students to express their opinions and also help the teacher to give feedback that suits the students' needs. The purpose of this study is to find out the students' perception on teachers' written feedback.

## **1.2. Research Problem**

In accordance with the background above, the research problem is as follows: what are the students' perceptions on teachers' written feedback and how is students' understanding of the teachers' written feedback.

## **1.3. Objective of the Study**

The objective of this study is to find out the students' perceptions on teachers' written feedback and their understanding of teachers' written feedback.

## **1.4. Theoretical Framework**

The focus of this study is finding out the students' perception on teachers' written feedback. The researcher uses the theory of writing, theory of teachers'

written feedback and theory of perception. The writing theory is taken from Harmer (2004). Taken from Harmer (2004), writing is a process when someone expresses

ideas using visible signs in order to communicate with others. The teachers' written feedback theory is taken from Mayukha (2018). According to Mayukha (2008), teachers' written feedback is the process of giving response about student's writing or tasks in order to improve their writing ability.

### **1.5. Delimitation and Scope**

The researcher limits the study to teachers' written feedback. The researcher chooses students from the English Education Study Program of Widya Mandala Catholic University of Surabaya academic year 2019/2020 taking Writing A. The researcher chose Writing A because this course is the first course in a series of Writing Courses that will be studied by students. Lessons in Writing A course are the initial stages where students learn about writing paragraphs. Before learning other types and genres in writing, students must already understand about paragraph writing. There are three classes for Writing A course and researcher choose all the three classes because all these three classes experienced teachers' written feedback.

### **1.6. Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study are expected to provide the writing teacher information about the students' opinions on written feedbacks given to them. It is expected that writing teacher can give the suitable feedback according to students' needs. The findings are also expected to give information about students' experience in interpreting the teachers' written feedback they received. This study can also be used as a reference for further research on the same topic.

### **1.7. Assumption**

This study is based on these following assumptions

- 1) The teacher gives a written feedback to students' writing and all of the students receive the written feedback.
- 2) Every student has his/her own perception about teachers' written feedback that s/he got from his/her writing teacher.
- 3) The researcher cannot control respondents' answers because they are free to express their opinions about teachers' written feedback.

### **1.8. Definition of Key Terms**

**Writing** is a process by which students can express or share their thoughts and put their thoughts in sentences and paragraphs using correct sentence patterns, sentence variety and punctuation.

**Writing A** is the first Writing course taken by students in the second semester where students learn about sentence patterns, punctuation marks, sentence types, sentence variety, paragraph, and essay.

**Teachers' written feedback** is a written input in the form of comments, suggestions, and corrections given by the respective teacher as a response to a student work.

**Perception** is students' opinions or thoughts on statements given about their experiences of receiving teachers' written feedback, which can be in the form of agreeing or disagree statements, explanations, comments, and suggestions.

### **1.9. Organization of the Thesis**

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 is about introduction. It consists of background of the problem, research problem, objectives of the study, theoretical framework, limitation and scope, definition of key terms, and organizational of the study. Chapter 2 is review of related literature which consists of the related theory and some related studies. Chapter 3 is about research method. This chapter presents the research design, the respondents, the instruments, the procedure of data collection, and the techniques of data analysis. Chapter 4 is about findings from questionnaire and interview that have been associated with the related theories. Chapter 5 is about conclusion and suggestion of the study.