

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

There are seven subchapters that are covered in this chapter. The first is the background of the study which describes the reasons why the researcher is interested in choosing the topic. The second is the statement of the problem which describes the reasons why the problem is important. The third is delimitation of the problem which describes the focus of this study. The fourth is about the research questions of this study. The fifth is the purposes of the study which describes the aims of this study. The sixth is the significances of the study which describes the benefits of this study toward particular people. The last is the outline of the study.

#### **Background of the Study**

Writing is one of the important skills in academic performance that should be mastered by students. Tsui (1999) stated that writing is one of the strategies that help students in developing their critical thinking skills. Writing can help students learn in different ways to develop their thoughts. So it can encourage students to develop their critical thinking. Paul, Richard and Elder (2007) also stated that writing can communicate the ideas into written form. Therefore, the students can express their ideas, opinion, and also their feeling in a written form as clear as possible to make their writing readable for the readers.

Basically, writing has several types of writing. There are three kinds of writing namely academic writing, job-related writing, and also personal writing.

Brown (2004) stated that writing consists of three types including academic writing, job-related writing, and personal writing. Thus, students need to learn and understand the three types of writing because writing is one of the basic English skills that students need to comprehend.

An essay is a kind of academic writing text that is usually taught in writing class. Sutrisno, Rasyid and Rahmat (2018) stated that essay consists of several paragraphs that build one topic. Thus, an essay is a written text which includes several paragraphs that develop one certain topic. There are several kinds of an essay, such as descriptive essay, process essay, compare and contrast essay, cause and effect essay, argumentative essay, critical essay, definition essay, narrative essay, expository essay, and persuasive essay. Although there are some different kinds of essays, the important thing is that essay is a kind of writing that discusses or analyzes one topic then supports the topic with specific details and explanations.

Essay writing is one of the common activities that is done in the learning process. Essay writing usually used by the teacher in the learning process as assessment tools. Spiller (2011) stated that an essay can be used as a flexible tool of assessment to measure the students' knowledge. Thus, essay writing can be used to assess students' understanding of certain material in the courses. Besides that essay writing usually also used as students' writing task. Therefore, The Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (2002) defined an essay as "students' writing task about a topic that has been developed"

(p. 240). So, it means that during the learning process students write an essay to complete their task.

Essay writing is one of the academic writing learned by English Department students at one of the private universities in Yogyakarta during English learning. Based on the researcher's interview with English Department students at one of the private universities in Yogyakarta, the researcher found that the students in that department have learned essay writing during English learning process. During English learning process, the students wrote an essay to accomplish the task related to particular courses such as writing paper, reports, close book journal, annotated bibliography, and reflection.

Based on the background above, the researcher is interested in conducting the study entitled "Students' Perception on Essay Writing in Writing Class". The researcher would like to find out the benefits which are perceived by students and the challenges are faced by students during writing an essay based on students' perception.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Essay writing has been learned by English Department students at one of the private universities in Yogyakarta. Based on the researcher's interview with English students in that department, there are several problems faced by the students when writing an essay during the teaching and the learning process. First, the students difficult to decide the essay topic. They are difficult to decide the proper topic of the essay that they going to write. Second, the students difficult to

state their ideas. Often in the middle of writing an essay, the students are confused to write down their ideas. Moreover, the students have the ideas in their minds but they are difficult to express it into sentences. Third, the students do not really have enough vocabulary mastery. Sometimes, the students difficult to write their thought into sentences because they have the limitation of vocabulary mastery. Fourth, the students faced the problem related to the grammatical error. When writing an essay, most of the students do not really understand about the use of proper tenses, it means that they are confused when they should use present tense, past tense, future tense, and so on. The other problem faced by students is the times given by the teacher to write an essay is too short. The limitation of time makes the students cannot write an essay perfectly because they cannot state their thought clearly.

### **Delimitation of the Problem**

This study focuses only on students' perception on essay writing in writing class in English Education Department at one of the private universities in Yogyakarta. The researcher examines students' perception on essay writing in relation to their experience during the learning process. The researcher explores the benefits of essay writing and also the challenges of essay writing as perceived by students during their learning to know the implementation of the learning process based on students' perception.

### **Research Questions**

Based on the background of the study, the statement of the problems, and delimitation, the research questions for this study are:

1. What are the benefits of essay writing in writing class as perceived by the students?
2. What are the challenges of essay writing in writing class as perceived by the students?

### **Objective of the Study**

Based on the research questions, the purposes of this study are:

1. To identify the benefits of essay writing in writing class as perceived by the students.
2. To identify the challenges of essay writing in writing class as perceived by the students.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study may give some benefits to several groups of people. They are students, teachers, and other researchers:

**Students.** This study presents information about the students' perception on essay writing in writing class. After the students read this study, the students are supposed to understand the benefits and the challenges of essay writing. By understanding the benefits of essay writing, the students can get the motivation to make a good essay. Then, by understanding the challenges of essay writing, the students are supposed to minimize the challenges.

**Teachers.** This study presents information about the challenges of essay writing. After reading this study, the teachers are supposed to understand the challenges faced by students in writing an essay. By understanding the challenges

of essay writing, the teachers will provide the strategies to avoid the challenges that the students might face when writing an essay.

**Other researchers.** Other researchers can use the finding of this study as the theoretical overview of further study on the same topic and might become a critical reference for further study.

### **Outline of the Study**

This study reports five chapters. Chapter one discusses the introduction of the study. There are seven subchapters that are covered in this chapter. The first is the background of the study which describes the reasons why the researcher is interested in choosing the topic. The second is the statement of the problem which describes the reasons why the problem is important. The third is delimitation of the problem which describes the focus of this study. The fourth is about the research questions of this study. The fifth is the purposes of the study which describes the aims of this study. The sixth is the significances of the study which describes the benefits of this study toward particular people. The last is the outline of the study.

Chapter two discusses the literature review and conceptual framework. There are several parts discussed in the literature review such as definition of writing, definition of essay writing, steps in essay writing, the benefits of essay writing in improving writing skills, the challenges of essay writing in improving writing skills, and also a review of related study. In addition, the conceptual framework discusses the summary of the concept of literature.

Chapter three discusses the research methodology that is used by the researcher. Chapter three includes research design, research setting, research participants, data collection methods, data collection procedure, and data analysis. There are several theories are included in chapter three which aim to support the research methodology.

Chapter four discusses the findings and discussion based on data analysis. There are two major findings reported in this study based on the research questions. First, the researcher reports the benefits of essay writing in writing class as perceived by the students. Second, the researcher reports the challenges of essay writing in writing class as perceived by the students.

Chapter five discusses the conclusion and recommendation of this study. The conclusion discusses the overall summary of this study including background of the study, objective of the study, and findings of the study. Moreover, the recommendations are presented to give some suggestions for this study.