

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A The Background of the Study

In learning English, students are required to master four language skills, there are listening, speaking, reading and writing. However, one of the language skills that encourage students to be more productive and creative is writing skills. Writing is one way of providing variety in classroom procedure. Writing skills can be a benchmark for English language skills. It helped the students to hone their understanding of vocabulary, structure and complement other language skills.

Writing as a productive skill is considered more difficult because the process involved thinking skills and the rules are more stringent. Everything that is shared has certainly gone through a process of being thought carefully until it is processed as well as possible. In writing activities, a student needs to express her ideas, experiences, thoughts, and feelings in a paper. In addition, writing must also be supported by adequate language components such as grammar and vocabulary (Harmer, 2003: 255).

In the Indonesian context where English is taught as a foreign language, students learn to write only for exam purposes and to get good scores. Therefore, it is not uncommon for students to feel dissatisfied with the writing activities. This is influenced by their respective attitudes.

Attitude is one of the success factors in writing learning. It played a key role in students' achievement. It included students' beliefs, feelings and behavior.

According to Baker (1992, p.12) Attitudes can be divided into three main components. They are cognitive, affective and conative. Cognitive refers to the beliefs or thoughts. Affective refers to the feelings. And Conative refers to the behaviors or experiences. However, we can not see an attitude as we can see a speed of train, because attitudes are in people's heads and can only be inferred from their responses.

The attitude toward writing is very important because it will influence their performance of a lesson. However, not all students have the same attitudes of their views in writing even though they receive the same information or instructions from the teacher. This condition is one of the caused of the low achievement obtained by students in writing because the attitudes of students toward writing can reflect their effort to achieve the target.

In the teaching writing, it is essential for the teacher to recognized their students' attitudes as it can help them predicted what factors might affect the students reflecting such attitude both positives or negatives during writing activities. Therefore, the teacher should found the best strategy to solve any problems that students faced during writing learning to achieve the target achievement.

Ideally, students should have a positive attitude towards writing as it can help them achieve better writing achievement. However, based on fact students' attitudes towards written tasks are artificial without a reasonable goal. This is due to writing activities in schools are taught through intense instructing. So that, writing activities become more teacher-centered in which the teachers take control

of the class rather than giving opportunity for the students to explore the ideas and creativity by themselves. Whereas writing ability and academic success are closely related because writing attitudes can predict writing achievement.

The preliminary data for this study is based on an interview with the students of grade 8 in SMPN 29 Medan. They showed the attitude that they have a desire to learn. Many of them want to improve their writing and read and write more vocabulary. But, actually they do not know the context of writing. On the other hand, they have million thoughts and feelings to be written, however, they cannot write it because they do not know how about organizing their ideas and knowledge of language components such as vocabulary and grammar itself. Most of them claimed that they like the way the teacher teaches them, but they are not given opportunity to learn more about writing. Besides that, they feel not compelled to follow this lesson because they are not given the opportunity to expressing ideas and combine sentences.

From the previous study, some researchers discuss about students' attitudes in writing. One of them is about students' attitudes toward learning English by Susanti, et.al (2019). The researchers stated that how the attitude displayed by students will determine the behavior, actions, and involvement of students in the learning process, so that it lead to the level of student understanding or student success in mastering the material. The results showed that the students reflected positive attitudes toward learning English, because the English teacher knew the factors affect students' positive attitudes so that he could apply the best strategy to maintain this condition.

Based on the background above, this study focused on analyzing students' attitudes toward English writing activities. This study is hoped to contribute to our knowledge in the field of students' attitudes and provided understanding to English teachers about the important things that must be considered to increase students' achievement in learning English, especially in writing subjects.

B The Problems of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problems of the study are formulated as follows:

1. What is the dominant component of students' attitudes toward English writing activities?
2. How are students' attitudes toward English Writing Activities?

C The Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the dominant component of students' attitudes in English Writing Activities in the classroom
2. To find out how the students' attitudes toward their English writing activities

D The Scope of the Study

Based on the identification of the problems formulated above, the researcher has scoped of this study. This study only limited on the students' attitudes toward their experiences in English writing activities during in the classroom. Then, the researcher focused only on analyzing students' attitude when they learn about recount text topics in term of writing skills.

E The Significances of the Study

The significances of this study expected to give benefit both theoretically and practically

1. Theoretically

The findings of this study can be used as input in the process of teaching English writing, so that teachers can determine the right teaching method in teaching writing. Besides that, the results of this study can be used as a reference for those who want to do the further of the study with the same topic

2. Practically

a. For the teachers

The results of this study are expected to be useful for the English teachers to know the students' attitudes toward writing learning implemented. So that, it will be a reflection for teachers to determine the teaching method to be implemented in order to achieve students' achievement.

b. For the students

The results of this study are expected to become one of considerable reading materials and also become a sample for the students in dealing with their attitudes in writing.

c. For the further researchers

The results of this study are expected to inspire or be a reference for other researchers to conduct the further of the study to find out if there is possibility attitude will be changed from positive to negative, especially from educational factors.