

Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Basic Consideration

It has been generally acknowledged that writing an essay, which is a traditional academic culture at the university level, poses a great difficulty for students, especially for those in the early stage of their university study. The literature in the field suggests that there are things that the students should take into account for them to be able to compose an essay namely: interesting topic to write about, how to organize the ideas in the writing, how to write in a good form, and the goals of writing the essay itself. To have an interesting topic to be written, students should have many references to reading texts. By reading intensively and extensively the students are assumed to have a vast array of a topic to be recalled when searching for topics to write about. Kendou (2014) points out that comprehending text is related to the students' way of making meaning of texts to gain knowledge and information. Through knowledge they get from extensively reading, students can start to write their essays. No matter what kind of essay they are going to write, the knowledge they get from reading various texts will be of great help to them.

To be able to write a good essay one should understand and have a clear view of what kind of essay he or she will write. One of the kinds of essays that are usually students compose is an argumentative essay which is usually known as a challenging and complex essay. Kuek (2010) indicates that an argumentative essay requires critical thinking while writing and cover a logical opinion and facts. Therefore, for writing an argumentative essay, students need good critical thinking to help them easily to write a good form essay. As Ka-kan-dee & Kaur (2015)

that the challenges of writing an argumentative essay is the common problem faced by EFL and ESL students around the world.

An argumentative essay is unlike any other type of essay. The specific features of an argumentative essay are refutation (rebuttal), and the essay itself is filled with the writer's argument (Setyowati, Sukmawan, El-Sulukiyyah, 2020). This essay encourages students to have logical arguments (Davis & Liss, 2005). When writing an argumentative essay, critical thinking skills are required. Furthermore, writing an argumentative essay is not an easy task. When writing an argumentative essay, students may encounter some difficulties.

One way to go to about this, the researcher supposes, is by identifying students' difficulties such as the cognitive process in writing. Flowers and Hayes (1981) stated that there are three parts to reflecting the writing included 1) task environment, 2) writer's long-term memory, and 3) writing process. Task environment includes all of those things outside and can influence the performance. The environment is composed of some writing instructions that determine (1) the general theme of the text to be written (Topic), its communicative goal (Audience), and (2) some motivational factors deriving from the writing situation (Motivating Cues). These things includes the rhetorical problem part. At the beginning of writing, the writer needs to analyze the appropriate topic to write and consider the goal (audience) so that the text can affect and catch readers' attention when they read it. It is important to begin writing by real-world issues or reflecting on personal experience which is stated and formulated into interesting statements. This is usually what happens when composing or writing process takes place. Then, writer draws a good writing situation to support or motivate a good writing process. Once this is completed the writer be able to start to draft a plan for the writing (text produce so far) (3), the

information and knowledge from previous things be used as the reference to progress as well as to revise the already written text.

Further Flower (1981) concerning task environment, it also integrated to writers' long term memory which helps the writer to store knowledge including topic, audience and various writing plans. After storing knowledge, the writer needs to have writing process which divided into three parts of planning, translating and reviewing. The planning process is retrieved from long term memory(the knowledge of topic and writing plans) and it is continued with the information in task environment (rhetorical problem and goal setting). The translating process is developed in each part of writing plan and consider to the use of correct sentences (grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, and so on). The last is reviewing related to re-reading, comprehending the text and editing. This method called as protocol (The Cognitive Process Model of the Composing Process).

As previous, the role of cognitive process in writing argumentative essay, may help students in guiding them as writing model. The writing model is drawn in each elements of cognitive process. The researcher thinks it is appropriate for an argumentative essay which challenging. For example, the task environment in the cognitive process give chance for students to have a good preparation before writing including reading some themes of issues and making a meaning of that reading. This activity related to argumentative elements of examine both sides (pros and cons). Here, students need to classify correctly of what the issues are about by giving their own idea from reading.

The researcher point of view is how the students solve their difficulties in writing an argumentative essay correctly. The researcher considered about their readiness for writing,

therefore good cooperation between lecturers and students in need in this case. When, lecturers give them a good instruction, writing materials and appropriate strategy, it can be guided them well in writing activity. Firstly, the instruction means the lecturers ask students to have some activities before, while and after writing. Before writing also as pre writing, students selecting themes, reading about the themes and create a new idea. While writing, students write paragraph to paragraph to be an argumentative essay. After writing, students need to review their essay by checking writing elements and organization of argumentative essay. Secondly, writing materials means lecturers have to provide students an argumentative course material. Thirdly, appropriate strategy to help students step to step on writing. As the result, students will have a good way in writing.

In EFL context, such Indonesia, some of challenges students face in developing an argumentative essay. First, Dedi (2020) reported that undergraduate students face problem in writing rebuttal parts in argumentative essay. This research used descriptive qualitative. In fact, this research collecting the data by using tests in writing argumentative essay. The topic given from IELTS topic. In his findings it was found some facts of elaborating rebuttal, level of achievement in argumentative essay and aspect appear in argumentative essay. First, it was found that elaborating rebuttal that there is an influential inconsistency between the opening moves of the conventional five-paragraph model and those of the opinion blog entries. Second, it was found the lowest average achievement is in the organization of the essay which is 21.55 out of 30 or 71.83% compared to the other four parts respectively: content, vocabulary, and language use. The last is the average score of the organization is the lowest one. The rest percentage of the average score is respectively tailed by the lowest one to the highest one, content, language use,

mechanic, and vocabulary. The result implies that teachers should be promoted the parts of rebuttal parts as marker of argumentative essay.

From Dedi's study, there were some cases should be considered. First, related to the way in collecting data only by using writing argumentative essay test. Also, the topic used by IELTS topic. Researcher assumed that the topic from IELTS is quite difficult for students. Most of the topics were complex. Therefore, students were confused and difficult to write the essay. Second, the research only used descriptive qualitative. In fact, argumentative essay is complicated task which needed to discuss more. The researcher assumed that it is should be better if the further research will used mixed method to conduct the research.

Second, Hanna (2021) found that some information from argumentative essay is unrelated and data for supporting the claim are seemingly insufficient. This research used qualitative research design. In addition, the students think that this essay as difficult task. In general, lack of knowledge, vocabulary and practice cause the constraints. In specific level, the students report that giving argument, finding support and working on counterargument become source of difficulty and constraints.

On the other hand, in ESL context such as Vietnam. Thi Hanh Dang (2020) found that students face difficulties of argumentative essay including linguistics competence, organization and development of argumentative essay and lack of critical thinking. The difficulties only found through questionnaire and interview, that is does not enough to solve the problem. Unfortunately, students in Vietnam is necessary, in case of finding a good job, because in vietname it is a big chance for them to have a good cooperation in trading for business correspondence, advertisements, job applications and business reports.

Through the previous studies above, it can be concluded that teachers or lecturers should be highlighted each parts of argumentative essay in teaching essay. By explaining those parts clearly, it may be helped students in learning and writing argumentative essay. In fact, the previous studies only explain it in general way. Thus, this is a chance for the researcher to fill the gaps by offering other aspects of cognitive process, reading and writing habits. In cognitive process, researcher offered stages in how determining topic, goals and how to write a good essay. In reading habit, researcher offered reading activity to create a reading habit as the beginning activity. The last is writing habit, researcher offered to make brainstorming to help students in writing essay. Overall, from three aspects it will be designed a proposed model for students in writing argumentative essay. In addition, the argumentative essay materials using Freshman's books which provided all the parts of argumentative essay.

The problems above are also faced by students of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo. Based on researcher's experiences and direct observation during studied English at Universitas Negeri Gorontalo, it was found that students faced problems in trouble in using grammar, cohesion, coherence, paragraph organization, diction, spelling errors, and how to generate ideas.

When compared to the objectives of the writing subject taught at UNG, these issues can be a significant impediment to goal achievement. The abilities of UNG students in writing essays remain at a low level. Grammatical issues, rhetoric, writing organization, idea generation, coherence, and cohesion are among the issues they face. All of these issues have been raised in the writing field's literature.

It is commonly assumed that poor writing ability, particularly in writing an essay, will be a significant obstacle to students' ability to complete their studies. The reason for this is that

students will benefit from the ability to compose a piece of writing when completing writing – related assignments. As a result, increasing students' ability to compose essays will contribute significantly to the success of English teaching in general at UNG.

The study of *An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Conducting the Scientific Research: A Case of Study of English Education Study Program and Economic Education Study Program of Universitas Negeri Gorontalo in Indonesia* conducted by Prof. Dr. Hj. Moon Hidayati Otoluwa, M.Hum (2021) found that students face a variety of challenges when conducting their thesis writing. This occurs because a thesis should be a combination of the right words in the right place and in the right order, which frequently confuses students. When faced with the task of writing a thesis, a researcher will naturally become perplexed as to how to organize his or her thoughts. Based on the mini observation conducted by the English Education Study Program and Economic Education Study Program, it was revealed that there is only 0.1% of the students could graduate in three years and a half. Moreover, there are only 17% of the students who could graduate on time or four years exactly.

From its research, it can be said that writing is a crucial thing that should be solved as soon as possible. To finish the study in University, students have to conduct research as the requirements. Writing research started by writing an essay. Essay as one of academic writing which encourage students to be critique to analyze issues around them and developed the idea into a good unity of essay. The elements of the essay include an introduction, body of the paragraph, and conclusion. By writing each element of the essay well, students may easier to explore their idea and arrange the organization of their writing. Therefore, it is important to learn and write an essay first, before starting to write research. Focus on the essay type, the argumentative essay is an appropriate one to guide students to have critical thinking in writing.

In argumentative, critical thinking can be found in counter argument part, where writers or students may give their different idea to reject the topic discussed. Critical thinking also included into critical reading for understanding text and inspiring ideas for writing (Risman, 2015).

Besides, critical thinking found in cognitive process for analyzing questions idea or issues (Paul & Elder, 2005). As found as task environment in cognitive process (Flowers Hayes , 1981). In summary, critical thinking is necessary for students in writing essay even research. Therefore, by having a good critical thinking, it may helped students in writing.

Furthermore, this research offered a strategy in minimizing students 'difficulties in writing argumentative essay. This present research designs new model built on from previous model on writing model. Different from the previous researches, in which the main focus is on the linguistics elements error and the process of translating students do while writing essay, this research offered a new strategies by combining the three main factors including cognitive process, reading and writing habits. Those factors also offered the solution to minimize students 'difficulties in writing essay. The strategies provide a new insight of cognitive reading and writing habits and shaping a good reading and writing habits while writing essay. Central to the strategies offered is the researcher guidance to students to have a self- regulation especially in writing activities.

Related to writing strategies of this research, Freshman (2001) suggested that there are some stages in writing argumentative essay including, examine both sides of topic, writing thesis statement, writing topic sentence, writing introduction, writing counter argument, writing supporting paragraph and writing conclusion.

These stages, as suggested by Freshmen (2001) above, have different challenge to write, start from identifying the pro and cons sides (examine both sides). This stage encourages students to analyze what are statements or issues including pro or cons position. After that, students determine the counter argument and take position of writers. This stage asks students to be more critical in understanding what issues about. When pro cons and counter argument are clear, the students can write the thesis statement. In thesis statement, students should think what should be a thesis for their essay. Thesis should represent the essay tell about, because thesis explains the whole of its essay. Therefore, students need to consider and select an appropriate thesis statement. When thesis statement is clear, students can write their topic sentence.

Topic sentence only focuses on what the certain paragraph discuss about. For example, second paragraph tell about reasons of smoking is danger and it can caused heart diseases. Hence , students focus on heart disease to explain more. Topic sentence is the focus sentence in each paragraph. After writing a topic sentence, students write an introduction. In introduction, it is cover the general knowledge of the topic and explain the thesis statement. General knowledge can be facts or quotation for certain topic discussed. When introduction is clear, students can write counter argument. Counter argument means the opposite argument and student students give two sides of counter and their position in the essay. To support the counter and position of writers, they should write the evidence and they make a conclusion.

In summary, the whole stages in writing argumentative essay, students should have good strategies in writing essay. The strategies related to the cognitive process of writing. These strategies were included to the main research.

In addition, Cheng (2007) did a research that was focused on teacher and students problems in writing lesson. In this study Cheng focused on the issue of peer editing. The students tend to be passive in the class because they do not feel confident enough to be a peer editor for their friend's essay and hardly revise the feedback from the teacher perfectly. Cheng (2007) tried to answer the challenge by applying a new technique to help teacher assessing students' essays with Computer Mediated Communication (CMC), so that the process of essay drafting became easier since the drafts were sent through email between teacher and students. It is shown that technology has helped teacher and students in terms of writing process, from drafting, giving feedback, revising, re-revising, until the final result of writing. It is more efficient and effective because students are able to send their work at time that suitable for them and teacher can revise them at time that suits her/him.

In contrast, Nyasimi (2014) indicated that most of the students were rarely engaged with interactive learning strategies. It happened because teaching writing methods that the lecturers often use were lecturer, question and answer, and demonstration by the teacher instead of touching more on classroom interaction such as group work, peer teaching, and role play.

Drawing on these studies on teaching writing, it is imperative that the teachers or lectures need to create and implement good strategies to get successful of learning writing and solving students' problems in English writing. In addition to cognitive process, reading and writing habits also may influence students' in writing essay. The correlation between cognitive process, reading and writing habits put on how students' learn essay by building idea, analyzing, comprehending and composing essay which those activities connected to reading and writing and it becomes habits.

Habits can be developed from how good the students organize their activities (reading and writing) as daily routine. Reading and writing habits refers to be a good reader/ writer or poor reader/ writer. It can be predicted that a good reader can be a good writer. The students' who have ability in reading will be more likely to have a good comprehension, analysis and critical thinking and also more knowledge. Therefore, we can say that good readers have a good chance to be able to write their essay and to be a good writer as well. In contrast, the poor readers will be a poor writer. Overall, reading and writing habits represent who the students are in academic field.

Related to reading and writing habits, Khoirunnisa (2018) found that there are some effects reading habits have on us. First, it can help us build up inspiration or ideas. Secondly, it promotes critical analysis. Thirdly, it enhanced knowledge. Next, it increase diction. Then, it help us get detail information. After that it strengthens theory. Finally it improves writing quality. From the previous research finding, it can be said that reading habits have a strong impact to students in their academic skills especially for the college students whose are mostly essay - related assignment.

Other study related to this issue was that done by Erna (2012) investigating students' reading habits of EFL students' in Indonesia. She used some indicators of reading habits including (the amount of reading practice, the length of time of having reading habits, the types of text read, the number of books read, the number of published writing, students' claims on their English reading habits and students' purposes of reading English texts). She found that most of the EFL students do not have good English reading habits although they have formally learned English from Elementary school to university. Further, Erna (2012) also found that the length of time to learn English does not guarantee the cultivation of good English. Even though the

students have positive beliefs about reading English, their motivations to read mostly come from school assignments.

Drawing on Erna's study on reading habits of EFL students, this present study adopted the indicators to be used as the instruments in identifying students' reading habit especially those at third semester on Writing for Professional context subject. The indicators includes amount of reading, the length of time having reading habits, the types of reading text, the number of books read and students' purposes of reading texts. Those indicators described what actually the students' reading habits in writing are.

Apart from good reading habit, good writing habits are also important for students to have. Good writing habits may indicate that the students have no problem in writing which means that they have good command on vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, cohesion and so on. In other words mastering these things is the requirement for one to be a good writer. like a good reader, a good writer also needs to make writing as habit and a need. This is due to the fact that writing is as complex task which need more practices. Or, we can say that if one lacks of practice in writing we may conclude that he/she lack of practices in reading and writing.

As explained before that in order to be able to write easily, the students should have read extensively first as the basic thing to get idea. If the students do not have good reading habit most probably they will have difficulties in composing a writing piece. Having low reading frequency can make them difficult in getting idea to be write about. Thus when the students want to master writing element, the students must read first, then start writing, apply their knowledge and strategies in writing essay. Therefore, if the students have less reading habit, they face many difficulties in writing and make them to be poor writer.

Therefore, it is important to deeply analyze the students' reading and writing habits which is the main issue in this research, as the continuation of the research above. The fact that reading and writing habit come in tandem is well established. They are integrated skills which have close relationship in which we comprehend and make meaning out of a text. Besides, it is also related to how students write their essay.

Langer (1986) found that while reading and writing are cognitively related efforts with regard to meaning making, they are markedly different with regard to activity, strategy and purpose. It is proved that both of reading and writing as integrated skill.

Reading habit refers to the behavior, which expresses the likeness of reading and tastes of reading (Sangkaeo, 1999). It is a way of how the reader organizes his or her reading and how often, how much, and what the readers read. A good reader becomes a good writer, it is because the relationship of reading and writing in classroom task. By having good reading habit, the students acquire more knowledge, grammar and vocabulary. By having these elements, it can help the students' become a good writer easily.

Being a good writer means that one has a good writing habit. Scott (2015) suggested there are some ways to build writing habits which include students writing time, schedule time for writing, track writing routine, find best location and writing process. It can be said that to be a good writer, the students must have strategies to do so.

From Scott's theory, the present study adopted and modified it into the instruments of writing habits including schedule for writing, track for writing routine, best location, writing process, students' writing habits and length time of having writing habits.

This research offered a strategy in minimizing students' difficulties in writing essay. This present research designs new strategy built on from previous model on writing model. Different from the previous researches, in which the main focus is on the linguistics elements error and the process of translating students do while writing essay, this research offered a new strategies by combining the three main factors including cognitive process, reading and writing habits. Those factors also offered the solution to minimize students' difficulties in writing essay. The strategies provide a new insight of cognitive reading and writing habits and shaping a good reading and writing habits while writing essay. Central to the strategies offered is the researcher guidance to students to have a self- regulation especially in writing activities.

Therefore, the major point to be investigated in this study is “minimizing students' writing difficulties in writing essay through cognitive process, reading and writing habits” which also produces a model of teaching writing and propose solutions on students' writing difficulties. Related to minimize students' difficulties in essay, the researcher uses mix methods of qualitative and quantitative. Whereas, qualitative focuses on the process of teaching and learning essay and quantitative focus on the students' results of essay. Qualitative way be conducted through interview and students' writing essay. In addition, the quantitative data was collected through pre-experimental design using pre-test, treatment and post-test.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the basic consideration above the problems that are investigated are:

- a) What are students' difficulties in writing argumentative essay?
- b) How cognitive process, reading and writing habits influencing students' difficulties in writing argumentative essay?

- c) How to minimize students' difficulties in writing argumentative essay by using the proposed model developed from Flower' and Bereiter model (cognitive process, reading and writing habits) ?

1.3 Aims of study

The aims of this research are as follows:

This research offers a model in minimizing students' difficulties in writing argumentative essay. This present research designs new model built on from previous model on writing model. Different from the previous researches, in which the main focus is on the linguistics elements error and the process of translating students do while writing argumentative essay, this research offered a new model by combining the three main factors including cognitive process, reading and writing habits. Those factors also offered the solution to minimize students' difficulties in writing argumentative essay. The model provide a new insight of cognitive reading and writing habits and shaping a good reading and writing habits while writing essay. Central to the strategies offered is the researcher guidance to students to have a self- regulation especially in writing activities.

1.4 Scope of Study and Delimitation

This research only focuses on how cognitive process, reading habits and writing habits influence the students' writing difficulties in writing Argumentative Essay. Those aspects are found out their correlation with the improvement in students' ability in writing essay. In addition, the writing model to help students write is also offered.

1.5 Significance of study

Theoretically, this research enriches the body of literature or reference in the field of writing in which the factors influenced the students' writing difficulties in writing an Essay based on their cognitive process is mostly highlighted. It is presumed that if students have a critical thinking in writing, they are able to develop their ability in writing an essay and the concept of cognitive process in writing. The researcher also offers a new model of teaching writing for academic writing and explains their reading and writing habits which can influence their comprehension and skill for both of the skills. The study will provide the teachers with the knowledge on students reading and writing habits which in turn can be the knowledge and motivation for EFL students in writing task. Besides, it can give the solution for students writing difficulties in writing argumentative essay and new insight of those factors influencing students writing difficulties in writing argumentative essay (cognitive process of writing, reading and writing habits).

Practically, this research provides the benefit, in which the lecturers of English department of UNG will have a reliable reference to identify the students' writing difficulties in writing argumentative essay based on their cognitive process. Therefore, the lecturer can consider these all when providing good material, instructions and techniques in teaching Writing for professional context subject. Besides, it also offers a combination model by adopting and modifying for teaching writing argumentative essay to encourage students' more self-regulated and understanding good argumentative essay for their subject in English Department. For example, when teaching an argumentative essay the lecturer can create a condition in which the students can activate their self regulated schemata in writing essay. For lecturer, it can be the alternative for applying teaching essay model. For example when facing difficulties in making

students understand the concept of writing an essay the teacher can opt to use the suggested strategies. It is my hope that this research will provide a good model as approach to develop a teaching and learning argumentative essay clearly. In addition, it can help students in creating a good reading and writing habits in writing argumentative essay. The next chapter discusses the theoretical related to this research.