CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Research

There are two kinds of productive skill in learning English. Writing is one of two productive skills in which the students are expected to produce language themselves to ensure their communicative competence (Harmer, 2007: 265). It is a means of communication in that it helps people share ideas, defend opinions, and sometimes a writer writes a message for readers who are away in space and time.

Writing activity is not only about the result of writing but also process in writing used by the writers. Sokolik (2003) clarified in Linse (2005: 98) that writing is a combination of process and product. The process refers to the act of gathering ideas and working with them until they are presented in a manner that is polished and comprehensible to readers. Meanwhile, according to Zamel (1982) in Nunan (2001: 36) the process refers to the act of composing evolves through several stages as discovery idea, through the process, message that writers are trying to say. Apart from this, the product focuses on the end of result of the act of composition by the students that is expected to be able to do as a fluent and competent user of the language such as letter, essay, story, and so on.

Furthermore writing is a process of getting products influenced by such elements as vocabulary, grammar, organization, content, mechanic, and style of
writing (Brown, 2003: 243-246). It is clarified that in writing activity students have to consider the writing’s elements to product good writing.

The more cultivated and more technologically advanced man is, the more use he will make of the written language. This means that writing plays important role in modern society. It can be said that is is very important for the advancement of human civilization. The use of written language are to preserve ideas of great thinkers in the past, to convey messages over long distances, and also writing is a representation of symbol of language, it naturally means that writing is a symbol of symbols (Ramelan, 1992: 13).

Occasionally, the students still confuse in delivering their ideas through written form because they have to pay attention more to some aspects such word choice, and the order of each sentence in order to produce a clear well-understood text. The students should be aware of the structure or grammar as well as the organization those should be well-constructed in writing. In addition, The students also have to consider whether the purpose of their writing can be understood or not by the reaaders (Stefanovicova, 2011: 18).

There was a possible reason that might happen. That reason could be the wrong strategy in writing. From the explanation above, a good strategy in writing was important. To apply strategy in writing the students should do a lot of practices. By obtaining exercises based on the certain situation, the students were able to practice writing and applied the writing strategy.

Students had reason to write and every student had different strategies to write and to be better in writing. Lecturers or teachers should know the students’
strategies, so that they can give the appropriate way to facilitate the students in writing. Moreover, many people believe that one of the key factors which affect writing is the writing strategies (Asmari, 2013 vol. 6 no. 11). Thus, (Gebhardt & Rodrigues, 1989) as cited in (Hammad, 2013) having a variety of writing strategies and skill can help students complete their writing tasks successfully.

Writing strategies are applied in the process of writing. Based on Brown (2000: 348) there are three stages of writing process. Firstly is pre-writing, in this stage students generate the ideas. Secondly is drafting, where students really begin writing by getting thoughts and idea down on paper, and the last is revising, this stage involves students check their writing.

There are some classifications of writing strategy proposed by experts. One of writing strategies is proposed by Rebecca Oxford (1990). Oxford divides writing strategies into two main classes, direct and indirect strategies, which are further subdivided into 6 groups, the strategies are memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies, and explain how each strategies aids the development of communicative competence. The memory, cognitive, compensation strategies are direct strategies which are applied by students for immediate response to language task. Memory strategies are those used to help students group comprehensible input and retrieve information. Cognitive strategies clarified as transformation of the target language by students to understand and produce foreign language. Last, compensation strategies help students to overcome knowledge gaps to continue the communication.
Further, metacognitive, affective, and social are indirect strategies that are used to prepare for language tasks and to help them increase more control of their learning. Metacognitive strategies are those used to organize learning of the students. Affective strategies defined as strategies which assist to be more active in learning writing. Social strategies are used to learn the target language through communication with others (Gafoordeen, 2013: 2 vol. 4 no. 26).

Based on explanations above, it was necessary to know the various writing strategies, especially Indonesian learners who learn English as foreign language. The reasons were strategies in writing can generate the students’ ideas, help students to write in well organized structure also improve students’ writing skill. By knowing the writing strategies, further action to make students have better writing skill can be determined. In addition, the strategies could help students in overcoming their problem in writing. Therefore, a research entitled “Writing Strategies Used by the Fourth Semester Students of English Education Department” was conducted at Muhammadiyah University of Purwokerto.

B. Reason of Research

The topic of this research was chosen based on the following considerations:

1. Writing plays an important role especially in modern society. The needs of writing in English nowadays are very great. Most companies require their applicants to be fluent in speaking and writing English.
2. Students’ writing strategies are important to be known to enable teachers or lecturers to facilitate the learning process appropriately.

C. Problem of Research

The problems of the research were formulated in two questions

1. What strategies do the students employ in writing English?

2. What are the dominant writing strategies used by the fourth semester students?

D. Aim of Research

The aims of research were

1. to find out the strategies employed by the students in writing English.

2. to find out the writing strategies most frequently used by the fourth semester students.

E. The Scope of Research

This study was intended to find out the students’ strategies in writing. As the subject of this study was college students in which based on the curriculum applied in English Education Department the students had writing subject namely essay writing. The students had to write texts in different types to train the students’ writing ability in composing paragraph and also delivering the purpose of the text written to the readers. This research focused on the students’ writing strategy in essay writing subject.
F. Contribution of Research

It is expected that this study could give significant values to the readers and other researchers.

1. For the readers

The result of the research is expected to be able to give students useful insights which enable them to improve their writing skill. Besides, by knowing the various writing strategies, hopefully the students could also be encouraged to apply the strategies in writing process.

2. For other researchers

This research could be a useful source for other researchers to conduct a research with the same topic. In addition, it can also be used as a motivation for other researchers to develop another better research.