



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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This chapter consists of ten sub-titles covering, background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, assumption, scope and limitation of the study, theoretical framework, definition of the key terms, research method, and organization of thesis.

1.1 Background of the Study

Neu (1987:169) states that “The acquisition and use of personal computers (PCs) by faculty and students has increased dramatically since 1980s; and word processing was identified as one of the main reasons for acquiring and using PCs.” This statement was supported by a survey published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (4/29/87) in which 42% of faculty and 40% of the students surveyed indicated that they had bought, and subsequently were using, their PCs primarily for word processing.

According to Fuori (1991:361) maps out that “Word Processing (WP), a term first coined by IBM in 1964, involves the processing of text record. Using a keyboard, text is typed in a computer where word processing program enables the text to be stored, manipulated, displayed, and printed out.”

In line with Fuori, Lockard (1990:37) states that the concept of word processing is to take away most of the mechanical problems associated with writing, such as: correcting the mistake on screen, editing, moving word or block

of text around or with other words, any and all changes can be accomplished with relative speed and ease.

In addition, Barends (1986:13) describes that word processing is also known as a more attractive use of computer for language learning, especially writing, because there are a number of good word processing programs to choose from and more coming out every month. Some of those programs are WordPerfect, Word, and PFS: Professional Write, WordStar, Multimedia Advantage, DisplayWrite, Apple II, Macintosh, and Microsoft Word (Ms.Word). Among these word processing, Ms.Word is the most popular word processing nowadays.

The discovery of word processing brought a lot of advantages in education, especially the one dealing with the learning of writing. The findings of a number of studies showed that word processing effected on writing quality, students' attitudes, and revision on their writing. Roblyer et. al (1988 qtd in Neu 1987:171) speculates that:

....The attraction of word processing for students lied in its ability to take the physical drudgery of writing by hand out of composing. The ability to undo any change at the press of key encourages students to take risks in editing their writing, which, in turn, lead students to revise their work more often. Being able to make changes, to examine the altered work, and quickly to change it back to the original form, if desired, provides a psychological freedom that stimulates students' creativity, their exploration of ideas, and their evaluation and revision of those ideas.

In line with Roblyer, Jarchow (1984 qtd in Locker 1990:48) summarized the positive arguments for using word processing. The most important one are: students are motivated to spend more time writing, style of writing can be improved, and students are encouraged to do more objective revision by learning more about combining sentences and arranging the content and clean drafts.

Neu (1987:169-170) discovered that word processing benefited for the students in the areas of grammar, word choices, and organization of paper. In general, the subjects held positive attitudes toward learning and using word processing in their ESL classroom.

The impact of word processing, in this case Ms.Word, has also gone widespread at the English Department of Widya Mandala Surabaya Catholic University (henceforth it is abbreviated to WMSCU). Since the academic year of 2002/2003, a writing lecturer has been conducting her writing classes in the multimedia laboratory on the basis of word processing. However, she modified the basic function of word processing (read: Ms.Word) by applying features such as: track changes, insert and view comment, and word count. The students, who enrolled in her writing course, attended classes in the multimedia laboratory. They had own PCs in this laboratory; each student had a writing folder in her or his PCs. The lecturer functioned more as a facilitator than as a lecturer. During the class, the students worked on a specific assignment and carried out particular task (e.g. brainstorming, writing outlines, creating drafts, and revising). The lecturer usually spent the first 10 to 20 minutes of the 2-hour-class explaining the goals and requirements for that class period, and then they worked individually or in groups. After the class, the students were allowed to continue their assignments in this laboratory.

The use of Ms.Word for learning writing at the English Department of WMSCU brought significant role, especially the ones dealing with the students' attitude. During joining this class, the writer learned some new features of

Ms.Word, such as word count, track changes, and insert and view comment. These features were really helpful since it could improve the quality of her writing. She also liked this class since she could come every time to the multimedia laboratory to revise her writing's assignments and her lecturer delivered the lesson through various techniques, such as writing through games, writing from a reading passage, and writing through pictures projected on LCD.

Soedjatmiko (2003:264) discovered that using Ms.Word for teaching descriptive writing is so helpful for her students, involving checking spelling and grammar mistakes, using thesaurus dictionary, and using word count feature. Besides, Ms.Word also provides tools "Track Changes" and "Insert and View Comment" which enable students to freely and responsibly accept or reject suggestion given by the tutor. In addition, Soedjatmiko (2004:9-10) found out that almost all the students agreed that the class was challenging and great. The students loved writing in the multimedia laboratory due to the relax situation (they could write in accordance to their own pace, they learned to directly write using computer.

Referring to the great findings of Soedjatmiko's studies and realizing that using Ms. Word in a writing class is a new way for the English Department of WMSCU, the writer is interested in conducting a study concerning the students' attitudes toward the learning of writing using Ms.Word in the multimedia laboratory at WMSCU.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study is designed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the English Department students' attitude toward the learning of writing using Ms.Word in the multimedia laboratory at WMSCU?
2. What are the reasons of the students' attitude toward the learning of writing using Ms.Word in the multimedia laboratory at WMSCU?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate, using descriptive qualitative research, the English Department students' attitude toward the learning of writing using Ms.Word in the multimedia laboratory at WMSCU; and the reasons of the students' attitude toward the learning of writing using Ms.Word in the multimedia laboratory at WMSCU.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that the results of this study will give a meaningful contribution to the improvement of English language learning, especially the learning of writing in English by using Ms.Word in the multimedia laboratory at WMSCU. Further, the writer hopes that the language learning in the future can be done through the existence of modern technology, particularly the computer. Besides, the findings of this study are likely to give a contribution to other researchers who want to conduct researches dealing with the use of computer in language learning, especially in the case of writing.

1.5 Assumption

Survey research using questionnaire might lead to the doubtful conclusion when in filling out the questionnaire, especially questionnaire with the scales, the subjects, just choose the options without reading the statement thoroughly. Therefore, sometimes the result of the questionnaire does not reflect the subjects' choice. In this case, this study has been done under the assumption that the subjects fill in the questionnaire honestly and seriously. In order to enhance the validity of the questionnaire, the writer also conducted a pilot study and in-depth interview with some subjects.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

Due to the limited time, the writer considers it is necessary to set limitation upon the scope of this study as follows:

1. This study is only focused on analyzing the attitude of the English Department students of WMCUS toward the learning of writing using Ms.Word in the Multimedia Laboratory. Although the use of Ms.Word in the writing classes can not be separated from the use of internet and e-portfolio, this study is not intended to describe the students' attitudes toward the use of both of internet nor e-portfolio.
2. The subjects of the study are the students who took the writing classes in the multimedia laboratory. They are the students of Group B of Writing B (odd semester of 2002/2003), Group B of Writing C (even semester of 2002/2003), Group E of Writing D (odd semester of 2003/2004), and

Group E of Writing D (odd semester of 2004/2005) whose classes were conducted in the multimedia laboratory and taught by the same lecturer.

3. There are several versions of Ms.Word (read: Microsoft Windows) that has been designed so far. In this case, the writing classes in the multimedia laboratory at WMCUS apply Ms.Word 2000.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Attitude which comprises of three components— affective, behavioral, and cognitive components is used as the theory underlying this study and the basis of making the questionnaire of this study

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

There are some terms needed to be explained in order to avoid misunderstanding. They are:

1. *Attitude* is defined as a mental predisposition to act that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor. Attitude consists of three components: affective component, behavior component, and cognitive component. (Scholl)
2. *Ms.Word* is a word processor (Word processor is computer software used to compose, format, edit, and print documents. This program is one of the earliest applications for office productivity and the personal computer; most modern word processors, including Microsoft Word take the advantages of word processor) program from Microsoft. It was originally

designed by Richard Brodie for IBM PC computers running DOS in 1983. Later version were created for the Apple Macintosh (1984), SCO UNIX, and Microsoft Windows (1989). (Farlex)

1.9 Research Method

In brief, this study was classified into descriptive-qualitative study since this study intended to describe the attitude of English Department's Students of WMSCU toward the learning of writing using Ms. Word in the multimedia laboratory without applying any statistical method. This study was also called a survey since the writer used questionnaire in gaining the relevant information.

The subjects of this study were 61 students of English Department of WMSCU, who took the writing class using Ms. Word. In this case, the writer used the convenience or availability sampling technique since only those subjects were available for the writer's study.

In gaining the data, the writer used questionnaire in the form of closed-ended questions with 1-4 scales. In-depth interview or unstructured interview was used as data tool for cross check on subjects' answer. While the writer acted as the data collector and data analyst.

1.10 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is Introduction, which deals with the Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Objective of the Study, Significance of the Study, Assumption, Scope and Limitation of the

Study, Theoretical Framework, Definition of Key Terms, Research Method and the Organization of the Study.

The second chapter is the Review of the Related Literature that discusses the underlying theory, some related literatures, and previous studies.

While the third chapter is the Research Method; it is divided into seven sub-titles; they are Research Design, the Subjects of the Study, Instruments of the Study, Procedures of Collecting the Data, Procedures of Analyzing the Data Piloting the Questionnaire, and Conducting the Research.

The fourth chapter, Findings and Discussion of the Findings, consists of two main sections, Findings, and Discussion of the Findings.

The last chapter, Conclusion and Suggestions, is divided into three parts; they are Conclusion, Suggestions, and Recommendations for Further Research.

