CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 of this research presents background of the study, statement of the problems, purposes of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and definition of the key terms. Each section is presented as follows.

1.1 Background of the Study

English has become a compulsory subject in many universities. Therefore, it is important to consider the particular English course that would be given to students in every different field of study. Since English as a subject has become a worldwide language, it is completely necessary in the world of science especially in education. It means, English is needed to be taught in specific ways in every field. In the words of Harrabi (2010), “An English for Specific Purposes (ESP) perspective means learning for a purpose and learning within a framework which makes reasons for learning not only clear, but also meaningful at the outset both learners and teachers.”

Nowadays, ESP has an important role in English teaching to increase the students’ knowledge about English in their field. English for Specific Purposes have been known as the subject which usually taught in the first year for the university students (Kavaliauskiene & Anusiene, 2010). ESP course is very important to be taught to help students in their learning. Harrabi (2010) states that “English has to be taught in specific ways in relation to specific purposes because, it is implied, transferability from one discursive context to another is limited.” It
means that, to make one context and another context in relation, English has to be taught in such a specific ways, so it can be more understood. Parallel with that, Knowing ESP as the thrifty and not take too long time to be taught, for example in a course of academic study (EAP) or effectiveness in paid employment (EOP), that makes ESP very essential for university students, Coffey in Beshaj (2015).

In the university level, ESP has become one of the important issues in teaching and learning. The differences of problem which faced by both teachers and learners in the university level may affect the prosperous of learning itself. Since there is an issue about teacher and learner interaction within specific context of English language that is ESP (Harrabi, 2010). It is generally known, while entering university, many students are not being ready to face their higher education such in the university level especially while doing the written assignment. The decrease number of remedying can be seen from the level of ESP courses level which the departments given to the students (Wiwezakrosi, 2000).

One of the most important skills that has to be learnt in ESP program is writing. Writing has been known as one of the very essential skills in the human history of education (Caroll (1990) in Huy, 2015). It provides a relatively permanent record of information, opinions, beliefs, feelings, arguments, explanations, theories; etc. Writing is a part of English language teaching as an essential tool for learning in which the students expand their knowledge of the language elements in the real use. As the consideration of well-educated people, writing is very important for nowadays society (Weigle, 2002). Furthermore, it is generally known that, as a skill, writing is very beneficial in increasing student’s
competence in such a wide area (Huy, 2015). By writing, people can explain, argue, criticize and express their ideas and feelings in such an appropriate way. Good writing will make students successful in their future. It is has been known that writing has become an important subject and activity in carrying information then transforming new knowledge to generating new understanding (Weigle, 2002).

Unfortunately, many students do not realize the importance of writing skill which affects their learning’s result. Basic mistakes are often done by the students in their written result such as in words organization, punctuating, spelling and grammar (Huy, 2015). Kavaliauskiene & Anusiene (2010) also state that, “Writing is a difficult and tiring activity and usually needs time for reflection and revision, plus a peaceful environment, none of which are generally available in the classroom.” From the statement above we can conclude that, writing skill in ESP program is very important for students to increase their learning’s result. Since increasing our achievement is not that easy, learning strategies are exceedingly required.

Learning strategy is one of the most effective ways to solve learning problems. Knowing that each student has their own learning strategies which are based on their own personality, background and learning style is very helpful to build up their competence to solve their learning problems in learning English as a foreign language (Leon, 2009). According to Oxford (in Fewell, 2010), “Language learner strategies are the action that learners employ to improve the development of their language learning skills.” Learning strategies help the
students diagnose their strengths and weaknesses in learning language (Cohen, 2003).

There are some previous research which are related to learning strategies. The first was reported by Prawesti (2007). The result of her research showed that students used all kinds of learning strategies to make them easy in learning Translation subject. The score for compensatory strategy was 100, affective strategy was 93, meta-cognitive strategy was 89.4, cognitive strategy was 88.6, and social strategy was 78.75. They tried to combine various strategies to create one of the conditions that could support them in making optimal study in Translation subject. Thus, the strategies most frequently employed by the students were compensatory strategy. The result shows that, almost all of the students realized the importance of learning strategies to improve their learning ability; they employed learning strategy that was appropriate for them.

The second research conducted by Inayah (2008) showed that the students of Science classes I and II employed six types of learning styles in learning English, there were visual style (35.2%), auditory style (37%), kinesthetic style (39.2%) tactile style (39%), group style (38.4%), and visual style (28.8%). In addition, the students also employed six types of learning strategies, there were memory strategy (21.3%), cognitive strategy (30.9%), compensatory strategy (14.9%), metacognitive strategy (25.5%), affective strategy (15.4%) and social strategy (14.4%). The major learning styles were kinesthetic style, tactile style, group style.
The other research conducted by Boniadi, Ghojazadeh, Rahmatvand (2013) setting, subject and method of research showed that ESP instruction was limited to training special vocabulary and reading and translating numerous texts. Of course, such a method did not reflect students’ interest and resulted in low motivation and their poor participation of the learners. Therefore, ESP courses for medical students should be based on target needs of the students representing communicative use of language rather than linguistic categories.

In this study, the writer wants to know the learning strategies employed by the ESP students in learning writing, the problems faced by the students and the students’ efforts to overcome their problems. Therefore, a research under the titled of “A Study on Learning Strategies Employed by ESP Students in Learning Writing at English Department University of Muhammadiyah Malang” is needed to be conducted.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Based on the background of the study, the researcher formulates the statement of the problems as follows:

1. What learning strategies do the students employ in learning writing in ESP program at English Department, University of Muhammadiyah Malang?

2. What problems do the students face in using their learning strategies in learning writing in ESP program at English Department, University of Muhammadiyah Malang?
3. What efforts do the students make to overcome their problems in using learning strategies in learning writing in ESP program at English Department, University of Muhammadiyah Malang?

1.3 Purposes of the Study

This study has some purposes as follows:

1. To describe learning strategies employed by the students in learning writing in ESP program at English Department, University of Muhammadiyah Malang.
2. To describe the problems faced by the students in using their learning strategies in learning writing in ESP program at English Department, University of Muhammadiyah Malang.
3. To describe the efforts made by students to overcome their problems in using their learning strategies in learning writing in ESP program at English Department, University of Muhammadiyah Malang.

1.4 Significance of the Study

It is expected that the result of this study will be beneficial for the lecturers. Firstly, by knowing learning strategies employed by the students, problems faced by students in using their learning strategies and the effort made by the students to overcome their problems in learning writing, the lecturers will be able to choose and apply the best strategy or method to teach writing to their students in order that the problems faced by the students in writing text are solved. Secondly, the result of this study is expected to give contribution to the students to know the best solution to their problems. Moreover, it is expected to make the
students more enjoyable in joining their ESP program since it improves their writing skill. For other researchers, it is hoped that they can explore more about the use of leaning strategies in education area in order to support the teaching and learning process in order to be more successful for both students and teachers.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The scope of this study is focused on learning strategies employed by the students in learning writing in ESP program, the problems faced by the students in using their learning strategies in learning writing in ESP program and the efforts made by students to overcome their problems in using their learning strategies in learning writing in ESP program. This study is limited in the second semester students of English Department, University of Muhammadiyah Malang.

1.6 Definition of the Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding of the terms used in this study, it is necessary for the writer to define them as follows:

- **Learning** is a relatively permanent change in a behavioral tendency and is the result of reinforced practice (Kimble & Garmezy in Brown, 2000).

- **Strategies** as states in Brown (2000) are those specific “attacks” that we make on a given problem. In this study, strategies are the way students confront their difficulty in learning writing.

- According to Brown (2000) **Writing** is result of thinking, drafting and revising procedures that require specialized skills. In this study, writing is one of the
subjects in ESP program which is given for the two semester students of English Department University of Muhammadiyah Malang.

- *ESP* is an approach to language learning which aims to prepare the learners to carry out a specific task or a set of task. In this study, ESP is a program arranged by Language Center of University of Muhammadiyah Malang which is expected to meet the specific needs of students in learning English in every different field.