

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a wide-ranging description of the study. It comprises the background, formulation of the problem, operational definitions, aim of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

A creative writing course at a university in Tasikmalaya applied a chain story technique for writing fiction. In this activity, the students were asked to write an opening sentence on a blank paper. After that, the paper was passed to the next student, who continued the story based on the sentence written by the first student. This process continued until the paper was passed around ten times. The last student who received the paper wrote the ending of the story and added a title for it. Throughout the activity, the lecturer provided guidance and encouraged the students to write stories freely based on their imagination without giving a specific theme.

Chain story is an engaging learning activity suitable for writing classes to improve the learning experience and make it more enjoyable for students. Magee (1993) stated a chain story is an activity that can make writing classes more engaging for students. Similarly, Sari and Erawati (2020) said it facilitates students in sharing, refining, and organizing their ideas into a coherent passage. Chain stories are typically conducted as group work, allowing the students to contribute equally. This practice has been recommended to improve students' writing skills and to create an inclusive and engaging learning experience (Gamal et al., 2018). Therefore, the chain story technique can support students in developing their writing skills.

Writing could be divided into two main genres, namely fiction and non-fiction. In writing fiction, the students are expected to use English vocabulary effectively and produce creative stories (Dewi & Siregar, 2022). Writing fiction means creating an imaginary world, but there is a problem: the students' desire to

write is very low because they are trained in a writing style they do not like, difficulty developing ideas, and building ideas to be coherent, clear, and systemic (Munir & Hendaryan, 2023). Another factor contributing to the low writing motivation is the teacher's way of organizing learning activities. In line with that, aspects that can improve creativity in writing are learning strategies, learning models, learning methods, and teaching materials (Alrawili et al., 2022; Saffran, 2018). Therefore, it is essential to implement an effective writing technique to address these challenges and help students improve their motivation and writing skills.

The chain story technique can be considered an effective way for fiction writing. It helps students feel relaxed and eager to write (Sari & Erawati, 2020). By using chain story, students can develop their writing skills while engaging in a fun and interactive activity. This technique fosters creativity, collaboration, and active participation, making it an effective strategy for enhancing students' writing abilities, such as reinforcing grammar lessons (Erben, 2007 as cited in Gamal et al., 2018). Shalihi et.al. (2022) stated the chain story encourages students to interact and collaborate with other students, allows to share knowledge and improved their writing skills. Using chain stories in creative writing contexts can potentially enhance the learning experience, as students are allowed to express themselves and explore their imagination. Seeing this phenomenon, it provides an idea for the researcher to explore students' experiences in using chain stories.

In recent years there has been an increased interest in studying chain story as a technique to teach writing. Shalihi et.al. (2022) conducted a study regarding the use of the chain story technique to determine its effect on students' writing skills. They used experimental research conducted in one of the high schools in Indonesia. Then, they collected the data by giving a pre-test, giving treatment in the class using the chain story technique, and a post-test. The results showed students can organize their ideas into paragraphs by paying attention to the paragraph structure in the story. However, there are some differences between their study and this study. Their study used experimental research, while this study used a case study because it was suitable for understanding phenomena broadly within a specific framework,

including the dynamics between individuals, methods, and learning contexts, making it particularly relevant for exploring how the chain story technique is applied in a course. Then, their study was conducted at a high school level only viewing the effect of chain story on writing skills, while this research was conducted in an undergraduate level context focusing on students' experiences to address the research gap found in the previous study. This provides a new contribution to the literature on the chain story technique, particularly in higher and more complex contexts such as creative writing courses in higher education. To fill the gap, the present study investigated students' experiences of using the chain story technique for writing activity at a Creative Writing Course.

Based on the previous explanation, the researcher is fascinated to conduct research entitled "Investigating Students' Experiences of Using Chain Story During Writing Practice in Creative Writing Course." This research involved undergraduate-level students at a university in Tasikmalaya. Ultimately, this research is expected to contribute as a reference for the teacher in utilizing chain story technique for fiction writing.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

The formulation of the problem formulated in this study is, "What are the students' experiences of using chain story technique during writing practice in Creative Writing course?"

1.3 Operational Definitions

The researcher provides three operational definitions related to the study to avoid misunderstanding about the terms set out in this study as follows:

1. Chain Story Technique : The chain story technique is a collaborative writing exercise where students take turns contributing storylines. The chain story technique here refers to a writing practice at the Creative Writing course.

2. Writing Practice : In the context of creative writing, a writing practice involves students engaging in the process of creating a simple fictional story.
3. Creative Writing Course : Creative Writing is one of the writing courses that is offered as an elective course to 5th-semester students of the English Education Department.
4. Students' Experiences : Students' experience is interaction in the classroom arising from students; natural motivation to learn. It is shaped by new information or abilities, encompassing mental, emotional, and practical aspects within their physical and social surroundings. The experience refers to students' experience when participating in a chain story activity.

1.4 Aim of the Study

According to the research question, this research aims to explore the students' experiences of using chain story technique during writing practice in a Creative Writing course.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to for three parties, there are:

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

This research will add to the source of information about the use of the chain story technique in a Creative Writing course. By exploring students' experiences in using this technique, this study provides detailed data on how the technique was implemented, the challenges faced, and the benefits on students' fiction writing skills.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

Practically, this study can be used as a reference and consideration for English teachers to use the chain story technique during writing practice in a Creative Writing course.

1.5.3 Empirical Significance

The research can provide insight for the researcher into how undergraduate students perceive the use of chain stories for writing creatively. The result of this research can provide empirical data for other researchers interested in investigating the chain story technique in developing writing skills and provide insights into how students directly experience, and interpret writing practice using chain story technique in a Creative Writing Course.