

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter orderly presents background of the study, research problems, objective of the study, significance of study, scope and limitation, and definition of key terms. Each section is presented as follows:

A. Background of the Study

Writing is one of skills in learning language that considered as the most difficult skill. Hammad said in his journal that mastering writing is most difficult for first and foreign language learners. It is a complicated process since it involve a series of forward and backward movements between the writer's ideas and the written text.¹

In writing, it is important to remember about the grammatical and the message written in the text. Writing is not only about stating the ideas into written form but also about arranging the words to be a good sentence by regarding the grammatical features. There are some requirements that have to be fulfilled to create a high quality text. Yanti states that writing is complex and difficult to teach and to learn, requiring mastery not only of grammatical and rhetorical devices but also of conceptual and judgmental elements. It can be concluded that to compose a good English essay, the mastery of language also a well

¹ Hammad Enas Abdullah, "Palestinian University Students' Problems with EFL Essay Writing in an Instructional Settin", *Journal of Second and Multiple Language Acquisition – JSMULA*, vol. 2, no. 1-21 (2014), p. 1, accessed 31 May 2016.

When the teachers give assessment to students, teachers have the certain criteria. In writing assignment, there are usually two aspects used as an assessment, there are; grammatical accuracy and communicative effectiveness. Grammatical accuracy is used to measure students' ability applying grammar used in writings. While communicative effectiveness is used to measure how proper the language used to convey students' ideas into written form.

In addition, two aspects are critical to ensure reliability and validity assessments made by teacher, the teacher also should have to pay attention to the ability of students that determine the level of language proficiency and knowledge which is affected by the way of learning through a course or not. Bachman and Savignon, Fulcher, and Matthews makes some criteria for reliability and validity, one of the criteria of reliability is standards for grading shift as students improve

[illegible]

during a course. The teacher unconsciously raises standards as the level of student ability increases.⁷ In most cases, a teacher in a higher grade will give the same average rating to her class as a teacher at a lower grade who uses the same rating scale. From these factors, teachers should make an assessment rubric that is valid and reliable. Rubric can represent criteria in the assessment of teachers.

Usually, the teachers make some criteria to score students' work, but without making a rating scale descriptor. The teacher assumes that rating student with rating scale descriptor is difficult, that is why teacher rates student without rating scale descriptor. Upshur and Turner makes some procedures for the development of rating scales can help address the issue of reliability and validity.⁸

Rating scale is so useful to help teacher describing student ability for each level in the same grade. Teacher using rating scale in rating student that develop based on student's level is a fair rating, because the rating scale descriptor developed based on the student's ability. When teacher makes a rating scale, teacher needs to know student's ability and level in a class. Skehan explain that criteria for evaluating performance more relevant to language development and use are needed. Tasks and scoring procedures need to be designed to

⁷ John A. Upshur and Carolyn E. Turner, “Constructing rating scales for second language tests”, *ELT journal*, vol. 49, no. 1 (1995), p. 5, accessed 31 May 2016.

⁸ John A. Upshur and Carolyn E. Turner, "Constructing rating scales for second language tests"... p. 5.

accommodate the naturalness of language use. Assessing such language effectively is more demanding than objective scoring.⁹

There are procedure for develop rating scale descriptor; first, eight student performances were selected from the set to be rated. These should represent approximately the full range of ability in the total set. Second, each of the six members of the research team individually divided the set of eight performances into the four better and four poorer. This was done impressionistically. Third, the team discussed their dichotomous rankings and reconciled any differences. They then formulated the simplest criteria¹ question that would allow them to classify performances as ‘upper-half’ or ‘lowerhalf’ according to the attribute that they were rating. Then, working with the four upper-half performances, the team

¹² Abdel Hamid Ahmed, "Students' problems with cohesion and coherence in EFL essay writing in Egypt: Different perspectives", *Literacy Information and Computer Education Journal (LICEJ)*, vol. 1, no. 4 (2010), p. 211, accessed 7 Jun 2016.

core in multiple object in the language. Doing so could lead to less objective assessment for researcher makes this place to be an object of research

Question

the development of *empirically-derived, binary* (EBB) scale for rating scale descriptor construction?

the implementation of *empirically derived, binary* (EBB) scale as a rating scale descriptor for writing

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D. Significant of the Study

The results of the study are hoped to give benefits for teachers, the researcher, and the other researchers:

1. For English Teacher

The teacher is able to make a rubric for the class based on student's level and ability. The student for each level in same grade will be described in rating scale descriptor. The teacher also can provide an assessment to students more objective. EBB scale using is more valid and detail for assessment.

2. For the School

The school will get more objective and valid assessment. The students in the school do not have to worry that the teacher will assess subjectively, because teachers use a rubric that includes all level of the class and the rubric is more detail.

E. Scope and Limitation

The researcher focuses on the development of rating scale and implementation of *empirically derived, binary-choice, boundary definition* (EBB) scale as a rating scale descriptor for writing assessment in SMAN 1 Wringinanom. The construct of EBB scale limit in five aspect was constructed by Uphsur and Turner and developed by the teacher, those are; content, grammatical and vocabulary, communicative effectiveness, and mechanics. The research is focused on first grade in X IPA 4 class of SMAN 1 Wringinanom.

