

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

English language teaching in Indonesia emphasizes on the students' ability to master the four language skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. The four skills should be reinforced equally. The integration of the four skills is the only plausible approach within a communicative, interactive framework. (Brown, 2000: 234). The standard competence of the four skills is enable students to communicate in spoken and written English accurately. The Department of National Education Curriculum 2004 states that,

“Standard Kompetensi Bahan Kajian adalah berkomunikasi dalam Bahasa Inggris lisan maupun tulis secara lancar dan akurat sesuai dengan konteks sosialnya. 1) Mendengarkan, memahami berbagai makna (interpersonal, ideasional, tekstual) dalam berbagai teks yang memiliki tujuan komunikatif, struktur teks, dan ciri kebahasaan tertentu. 2) Berbicara, mengungkapkan berbagai makna (interpersonal, ideasional, tekstual) dalam berbagai teks yang memiliki tujuan komunikatif, struktur teks, dan ciri kebahasaan tertentu. 3) Membaca, memahami makna berbagai makna (interpersonal, ideasional, tekstual) dalam berbagai teks yang memiliki tujuan komunikatif, struktur teks, dan ciri kebahasaan tertentu. 4) Menulis, mengungkapkan berbagai makna (interpersonal, ideasional, tekstual) dalam berbagai teks yang memiliki tujuan komunikatif, struktur teks, dan ciri kebahasaan tertentu (Depdiknas, 2004).

The standard competence as stated in Curriculum 2004 is in coherence with the theory of communicative competence by Murcia (1995). Communicative competence suggests the learners in mastering the

four kinds of skills. The model of communication competence is taken from Murcia (1995:10). In her model Murcia tried to develop the competencies in order that the students can achieve communicative competence. The core of communicative competence is discourse competence. Discourse competence concern with the selection, sequencing and the arrangement of word, structure, sentences and utterances to achieve unified spoken or written text (1995: 13). In order to come to discourse competence the learner has to acquire some competencies namely linguistic competence, action competence and socio cultural competence.

Hymes in Freeman (2000: 121) pointed that being able to communicative requires more than linguistic competence; it also requires communicative competence. The competence in English language as a foreign language will help the students to express ideas and feelings and use in the society. They are also expected to be able to make personal or social decision and have responsibility, and make use the analytical and imaginative competencies in themselves (Depdiknas, 2004:5).

In order to get mastery on those skills, the students may get many problems. In this thesis, the writer wants to discuss one of the many problems connected with English learning. English learning problems can take place both at home and at school. The teacher and the students are different, and therefore, we might find different motivations for learning as well. At school, the problems may appear when the class consists of a big number of students. The noisy class does not only disturb the students who really want to study, but also influence the students' concentration to the

subject given in class. The condition like this can make the students feel bored and do not like to study. At home, the problems may appear when they recall the subjects from school and they still do not understand the lesson and none of the people at home can help them. If this condition continues they will feel very bored and not interested in studying English. In this case the teacher's role is very important, that is to encourage them to study harder and better.

In teaching writing, a genre – based approach refers to teaching students how to make use of language patterns to achieve coherent and purposeful composition (Hyland in Widodo, 2007: 173). Hence, there are some importance of teaching Genre – based writing as :

1. Genre serves as the frame of reference to which a particular text to be oriented.
2. It is closely tied with the discussion of communicative purpose (intention), and conventionalized format (rhetorical structure) of a text, and linguistic realization.
3. It provides a reference for a particular communicative purpose to achieve, stages of rhetorical structures to cover and linguistic features to stick, by which the readers' expectations can be met effectively.
4. It provides frameworks that recognize and share the same features among the people in the related field. It mediates the interrelationship between texts, writers and readers (Pardiyono, 2004: 28-29)

Thus, a genre-based approach to the teaching of writing is one in which writing is viewed as both process and product of the whole process of writing.

Generally, text-types maybe grouped into :

1. Narratives : to tell stories to entertain readers.
2. Recounts : to reconstruct past experiences by retelling events in original sequences or to tell what happened both personally and factually.
3. Instructions / procedures : to show how processes or events are achieved or how something is done.
4. Explanations : to tell how or why something work.
5. Information / reports : to present factual information about a class of things and their characteristics.
6. Arguments / Expositions : to provide reasons for a state of affairs or a judgment.
7. Descriptions : to describe living or non living things.

For instance, text types maybe found in letters, articles, text books, journals, recipes, manuals, songs, novels, advertisements, notices, tickets, speeches, lectures, or menus (Partridge in Widodo, 2006: 177)

In addition, students' problems are not only from the classroom environment but also from the students themselves. The reality we often see is that, in fact, many students master the theory better than practice. For example, in writing, they may have the knowledge of how to write, but in practice they find difficulties. They lack self confidence. To build their

confidence, students need more practice so that teachers are suggested to create and use interesting method and media.

It is undeniable that writing is probably one the most important things in life. By writing people are able to express ideas, feeling and opinion and able to communicate with other people. In addition, most of important official documents such as laws, formal regulations, treaties, guaranties, contracts and so forth are made in the written form. In daily life, people get announcement, advertisements, letters, information, even warning in the form of writing. At school, there are a lot of writing works such as taking a note, making lists, completing laboratory reports and composing any kinds of texts and others. In sort, people are consciously or unconsciously engaged in writing a lot.

Basic competency in writing skill for class X of Senior High School students is focused on writing text, such as recount (or narration), description and news with variation structures of modification (KTSP SMA).

On the other hand, the fact in class showed that the students had problems with their writing skill. They got difficulties to generate and organize their idea in the written-form. It can be identified by several indicators in the class related with their writing skill such as;

- 1) Most of the students faced difficulties in starting to make compositions.
- 2) Some of them made many grammatical mistakes.
- 3) Some of the students got difficulties in expressing ideas even lack of idea.

- 4) The students were not able to organize the ideas logically.
- 5) The students were not capable to develop readable paragraphs.
- 6) They were even careless about punctuations.

Based on the quantitative data, the writer found that the students, whose their daily score taken by their English teacher, who got mark in writing more than 7 were only 5 students. Those who got between 6 and 7 were 10 students, and the other students got less than 6 from totally 40 students in that class. They didn't show their writing competence well. They performed some mistakes in grammar by using uncontrolled pattern, almost 80% of them often mistyped the words, 50% had illogical ideas, and 75% did not have well structure. Shortly, they had low writing skill. In short, the students who fulfill the minimum passing grade (KKM) of speaking are less than 60% .The result of course can not be said as satisfying result. KKM is very important as it is due to now, every school must use 'School Level Based Curricula' (*KTSP: Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan*). This curriculum has certain policy that each school has to fulfill minimum required standard (*KKM*) by every lesson, as well as for English lesson.

The writer tried to find out the causes of the problem by conducting writing assessment as a pre-test. In this assessment, the writer wanted to test the students' ability to demonstrate their skill in writing. The writer asked them to write about their unforgettable experience. The aspects to be noticed were content, organization, discourse, syntax, vocabulary and mechanic of their writing results. The result of the students' writings actually became the writer's deep concern. The students' could only write

few sentences telling about experience. The vocabulary used in their text is very limited and even, created misunderstanding toward the reader. They made a lot of grammatical mistakes and used inaccurate vocabularies.

The data showed that 77% of the students did not fulfill the passing grade of writing class. The minimal passing grade for class X is that 75% of the students had to achieve score 65. Comparing the students' writing assessment and the score in minimal passing grade, the students can be categorized lack on writing skill.

The teacher also held interview and class observation to get supporting data about the cause of the students' lack of writing skill. By observing the students' interview result, most of students felt they were lack of practice in writing. Hence, they found difficulties to express their idea into appropriate sentences and paragraph.

From students' social environment and family background point of view, it can be noticed that most of the students (60% of students) come from modest family. Their parents are farmers, sellers, housemaids, and factory workers. They are under welfare family. It means it difficult for them to gain English out of school, such as English course.

From the interview result of the students' parents, it can be described that the students got problems in English especially writing because the parents said the students did not like English (20%), they never studied at home or they preferred watching TV than studying (60%) and they had to help the parents working after school (20%). Moreover, the

parents also admitted that many of them (up to 40%) could not assist their children in studying because they were very busy to work.

Beside that, the teaching learning process did not offer supporting situation for the students to improve writing. The teacher taught the materials monotonously. For example, when he taught a certain topic, he just explained, write on the board, and the students listened to him. Then, he asked them to do exercises. It lasted time to time and created boring English for the students. The teacher still taught the students with routine activities without realizing that it would make the students bored and lost their attention in the material. As a result, they got nothing from the lesson. Douglas stated that, "*Routine activities in learning can make the students bored. As a result, their motivation and participation in learning will decrease*" (1987: 48).

Since the students felt that they were also lack of vocabulary and grammar, it discouraged them to practice writing more. In short, the students themselves had low motivation a factor which will be very significant in mastering second language acquisition (Brown, 2000: 150). In this case, interest also becomes a crucial factor to consider in deciding teaching-learning activities for the students. In other words, there should be interesting atmosphere that encourage the students in learning writing.

In order to make writing more interesting, good media are needed. According to Munadi (1980), to select the appropriate media, the teacher must consider the characteristics of the students, which directly related to the learning process such as verbal abilities, visual and audio perception

skills. Other factors which also ought to be considered in media selection come from our instructional system model, that is, the organization of groups, the time available and the space in which the media will be used (Munadi, 2008: 255).

Based on the fact above, the writer planned to a classroom action research to promote the students' writing skill by using comic books as teaching media. Comic strips are a series of pictures telling about something. They are narratives as they tell stories in pictures and words. The first comics showed political cartoons of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, containing the speech and thoughts of various political figures (Sadler et.al, 2000: 28). Comic is one of the many media to teach story retelling. Comics are an art form using a series of static images in fixed sequence. Using English comics as a means for teaching story retelling can be very pleasing and interesting for the students. By using English comics students will be more interested and more active in learning. They will feel something new and different from what they usually get in their class. The writer hopes that with the use of English comics they will be active as participants and they have more a chance to express their minds, emotions, feelings and attitudes. The comics become hobbies for children even adults during their time at home. Comics are interesting. They provide interesting series of pictures, simple language, and 'light' topics. According to the facts above, the teacher was eager to develop the students' ability in writing by using comic books. It is expected that the students were able to improve their writing.

Therefore, by using comic books as teaching material, the writer expected that reading ability of students class X of SMAN Jenawi would increase. The participation of the students and the active involvement of the teacher were very crucial. In another words, the students needed to be active in taking a role as a learner. And the teacher had an important role and strategic position in developing student's reading skill. This strategic role related with teacher role as facilitator, motivator, learning resources, and organizatory in teaching and learning process.

B. Problem Formulation

Based on the background and the problem identification, this study particularly aimed at finding the answers to the following questions

1. Does the use of combination between word map and comics strips as teaching media improve the students' writing recount-text skill of the first grade students of SMA Negeri Jenawi?
2. How did word-map and comics improve the students' writing recount-text skill?
3. What were the problems occurred during the application of comics as a media to teach writing in class X of SMA Negeri Jenawi?

C. Objectives of the Research

From this research, the author wants to achieve some objectives; the general objective and the specific ones.

1. The General Objective

The general objective is to describe the implementation of word-map and comics strips as teaching media to improve the students' writing recount-text skill in class X of SMA Negeri Jenawi Karanganyar Academic Year 2010/2011.

2. The Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the research are:

- a. to identify whether word map and comics strips as teaching media are able to improve the students' writing recount-text skill on the first grade of SMA Negeri Jenawi
- b. to identify the effectiveness of word-map and comics strips to improve the students' writing recount-text skill
- c. to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the use of comics as a media to teach writing in class X of SMA Negeri Jenawi.

D. The Benefits of the Study

By the thesis the author expects that this research would give several benefits, both theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretical Benefits

- a. To produce a new knowledge in teaching foreign language, like English, especially on writing recount text by using comics as a teaching media.
- b. Becomes a reference for next researchers whether with the similar or different approach

2. Practical Benefits

a. For the Students

- 1) Get an easy way in organizing their idea(s) or information(s) integrated in writing recount text.
- 2) Make them aware that there is difference in culture in each nation which causes different text.

b. For the Teacher

- 1) Gets knowledge to improve teaching strategy, especially in writing recount text.
- 2) Improves professionalism and abilities in teaching, especially in writing recount text.
- 3) Identifies students' necessities and problems and gives solution(s).

c. For the School

- 1) Betterment on teaching and learning English.
- 2) Solution(s) for students' problem(s) in writing report text in English.
- 3) Improvement on students' achievement in English