

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

In studying English there are four language skills that have to be achieved by students. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing skill. According to Fauziati (2010:45) writing has always occupied a place in most English language course. It means that writing is one of the important aspects in learning English.

In fact, there are many students who have difficulties in writing. They usually make mistakes in grammar, diction, and punctuation. As stated by Leki (1996:173) in Fauziati (2010:46) that the main purpose of the learners' writing activity is "to catch grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors." Therefore, the students need some exercises, especially on writing exercises to improve their understanding to the writing material. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2004:543) states that exercise is a set of questions in a book that test a student's knowledge or skill. Here the writer focuses on writing skill.

The students can gain many exercises through learning media such as textbook. It can be used to support the teaching and learning process. As stated by Brown (1994:145) that the most obvious and most common form of material support for language instruction comes through textbook. Textbook is one of the teacher products. Brown (1994:151) states that textbooks are one type of text, a book for use in an educational curriculum.

Recently, there are many kinds of English textbooks that have been published by the publisher. One of them is *Flying Start* for junior high school published by Esis. The writer chooses *Flying Start* because the textbook asserts that it is based on the school level-based curriculum but it's questionable whether the textbook is compatible with the curriculum or not. It must be investigated more. This case encourages the writer to make an evaluation of English textbook based on school level-based curriculum because since 2006 the Indonesian government implements the school level-based curriculum. It is a curriculum which gives a chance for government and every school to develop this curriculum according to the school potency in each area. So, the learners can obtain the English textbook that is suitable with their needs.

The evaluation of writing exercises based on school level-based curriculum can be seen in the following examples.

Now write a description of your classroom.

Begin with:

- 1) The size, then
- 2) The people, then
- 3) The big objects, then
- 4) The small objects.

From the datum above, it can be defined that the exercise develops students' competency in making a descriptive text. The instruction asks the students to write a descriptive text about the students' classroom. The instruction also gives some clues to help students in doing the exercise. The exercise is appropriate with the indicator of school level-based curriculum: write the kinds of text in the form of descriptive.

Besides evaluating the textbook based on the school level-based curriculum, the writer also evaluates the textbook with the communicative exercise. The sample below is one of the communicative exercises.

Write the missing words. Use words from the box below.

Turn on help open get go here

- 1) Ms. Dini : Open your workbook, Dio!
 Dio : This one, Ms. Dini?
 Ms. Dini : No, Dio. That's a notebook.
 _____ the other one!
 Dio : Oh, this one! What page?
 Ms. Dini : _____ to page 22.
- 2) Ivan : Would you _____ me that book, Eka?
 Eka : Which book?
 Ivan : The English book. On the third shelf.
 Eka : Sure, _____ you are.
- 3) Oscar : Can you _____ me with my computer , Lynn?
 Lynn : Pardon?
 Oscar : Can you _____ the computer for me, please?
 Lynn : Oh sure. That's easy.

The datum above shows that the exercise belongs to the information gap principle. In the exercise, the students are asked to complete the conversation with the suitable word. The students can pick the suitable word in the box. So, it can enable the students in doing the exercise. Here, the students are expected to develop their writing skill.

Based on the explanation above, the writer will evaluate the English textbook based on the school level-based curriculum and the communicative exercises. The writer only focuses on writing exercises. So the writer conducts the research entitled *The Evaluation of Writing Exercises of **Flying Start** Textbook Based on School Level-based Curriculum.*

B. Limitation of the Study

In conducting this research, the writer limits the problems that are going to be discussed. This research only focuses on the evaluation of writing exercises of English textbook with the school level-based curriculum used in SMP IT Nur Hidayah Surakarta and communicative exercise. The writer analyzes *Flying Start* textbook grade VII for junior high school written by Jeanette Lindsey-Clark, Agnes Shanti Nindyarini, and Rahma Diana Sari. The textbook is published by Esis in 2007.

C. Problem Statement

Based on the phenomena mentioned on the background of this study, the writer formulates the following problems.

1. Are the writing exercises compatible with those required of school level-based curriculum in SMP IT Nur Hidayah Surakarta?
2. Are the writing exercises developed in the English textbook entitled *Flying Start* communicative?

D. Objective of the Study

In relation to the above problem statements, the writer has the following research objectives.

1. To describe whether or not the writing exercises are compatible with those required of school level-based curriculum in SMP IT Nur Hidayah Surakarta.
2. To describe whether or not the writing exercises in the English textbook entitled *Flying Start* are communicative.

E. Benefit of the Study

The benefit of the study is divided into two parts. They are theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretically

a. Student

- 1) It improves the students' understanding about good exercise, especially on writing exercise based on the school level-based curriculum.
- 2) The students get more knowledge about the school level-based curriculum.

b. Lecturer

- 1) The result of this study may encourage the lecturer to enable in teaching English by using good exercise, especially on writing exercises.
- 2) The lecturer gets information deeply about the quality of the textbook.

2. Practically

a. Other Researcher

- 1) It can be reference the other researcher who conducts the similar research.
- 2) It helps the other researcher more understand about the good writing exercises of English textbook based on the school level-based curriculum.

b. Publisher

It helps the publisher in making various writing exercises in the English textbook.

F. Research Paper Organization

In conducting this research paper, the writer organizes it into five chapters as follows:

Chapter 1 is introduction. This chapter exposes background of the study, limitation of the study, problem statement, objective of the study, benefit of the study, and research paper organization.

Chapter II is review of related literature. This chapter concerns with previous study, writing exercise, communicative approach, textbook, textbook evaluation, school-level based curriculum, school-level based curriculum developed by SMP IT Nur Hidayah, and syllabus.

Chapter III is research method. It presents type of the research, data and data source, method of collecting data, and technique for analyzing data.

Chapter IV is research finding and discussion. It contains the appropriateness of writing exercises with those required by school level-based curriculum of SMP IT Nur Hidayah, the non-appropriateness of writing exercises with those required by school level-based curriculum of SMP IT Nur Hidayah, communicative exercise and discussion.

Chapter V is the last chapter. It consists of conclusion and suggestion based on the discussion of the research finding.