

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the study, problem of the study, objective of the study, significances of the study, and definition of the key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

In this era, English is the most essential language because it is used as international communication. Jalilehvand (2012, p.329) states, "Up to date, the English language, which is mostly used in international communication, is the most important language in the world." The importance of English is not only used for oral communication, but also through written context. For example, in educational context, there are many sources written in English. If students want to get a lot of information from those sources, they should master English. It means that along with the increase of English usage, thus there is also an increasing in teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language.

Writing is one of the language skills which should be mastered by EFL students besides listening, speaking, and reading. Among the four skills, writing has important role in learning language. First, writing is used to measure students' achievement. Kingston et al (2002) state that students' achievement in learning English is only measured by the productive skills, especially the writing performance. In addition, Harmer (2004, p.3) explains, "in the context of education, whether they are testing foreign language abilities or other skills, often rely on the students' writing proficiency in order to measure their knowledge."

Second, writing is used for communication. Writing is used as a way to express thoughts in order to make the others know what we want them to know through written form. Bachani (2003, p.1) explains, "Writing represents our thoughts and ideas. What one thinks leads to one are writing in the form of sentences and by organizing the sentences into a cohesive text where we are able to communicate with our readers successfully" Furthermore, Broughton et al (1980, p.119) describe, "the responsibility of the writing program particularly to train students to produce sequences of sentences which express their meaning most effectively" To sum up, writing is considered an important skill in learning language because it is used as measuring tool and also communication tool.

Considering the importance of writing in educational context, moreover the English teacher found that teaching writing is complicated. Heaton (1995, p.136) says, "the writing skills are complex and sometimes difficult to teach, requiring mastery not only of grammatical and rhetorical devices but also of conceptual and judgment elements." There are two reasons lying on the difficulties in teaching writing. First, there are several stages which should be taught to the students in order to make understandable text. Negari (2011) explains that writing is a complicated process which involves a number of activities, which are brainstorming, planning, outlining, organizing, drafting, and revising. Second, there are some instructional goals which should be achieved in teaching writing.

For instance in Indonesian schools, the teacher should follow the syllabus of the latest curriculum which reveals the goals of the teaching and learning process.

According to curriculum 2013, the students are expected to use writing as

communication tool that will bring as close as in real context. For the eighth graders, they are expected to be able in developing and producing functional written text in form of descriptive, recount and narrative. (Depdiknas, 2013).

Narrative text is a kind of text types which has purpose to entertain the readers with a story, such as folklore, myth, fable, and so on. Anderson and Anderson (1998) explain that narrative text is a text that tells a story which has purpose in entertaining the readers and also teaching the readers a lesson. The students who are going to construct narrative text should be able to follow chronological steps from orientation, complication and then resolution stage. They also should be able to be creative in expressing their thought and using appropriate linguistic features.

Unfortunately, many students of junior high schools are not good enough at writing in English. Their ability of writing is low because they got some difficulties in writing. They spend a lot of time to generate ideas. Negari (2011, p.299) states, "Learning to write is difficult especially for those writing in a second or a foreign language in academic contexts since they do not know enough about how to generate ideas for writing." Moreover, they are also having difficulties in choosing appropriate words or grammatical features which make them hesitate to write. Raimes (1983) explains that the students need to discover the right words and the right sentences. Those problems become even worse with the conventional strategy which is used by the teacher. The teacher drills them to translate each paragraph of text and write their own story according to the example on their book without guiding them to write in correct order. This

condition makes the students bored in doing the task and unable to develop their writing skill. Ariningsih (2010, p.104) argues, "The writing skill of the students having high motivation is better than that of those having low motivation in learning English." In other words, the students' ability in writing is also influenced by the students' motivation in learning writing.

Reflecting with the general problems in writing, the researcher conducted preliminary study on February 26th and 27th, 2015 to find out the ability of the students in writing narrative text. The researcher used some instruments (test, field notes, questionnaire, and interview guide) to collect necessary data from 26 out of 32 students VIII-A class in *SMP Negeri 11 Malang* using. From those results, it showed that the students had difficulties in writing narrative text. The results of test revealed that all of the students got lower score than 75 as the standard minimum scored (KKM) (see Appendix 1a). Moreover, the researcher elaborated the results of field notes (see Appendix 2a), interview (see Appendix 3a), and questionnaire (see Appendix 4a) to find out the students' writing problems. There were two problems found when the students wrote narrative text.

First, the problem was dealing with the content aspect. The students were confused to generate ideas, such as organizing and developing ideas into a good paragraph. Second, the problem was language use. The students were lack of knowledge in vocabulary and grammar. They had a problem in finding appropriate word to describe what they want. Whenever they got difficulties dealing with vocabulary, they would ask some helps to the other students and also the teacher. The students were also afraid to write because they could not write the

correct grammar. It was proven from the result of questionnaire, there were 23 out of 26 students had difficulty on grammar. Furthermore, there were 22 out of 26 students said that they had problems in vocabulary. Actually, this study was focused on solving the first problem.

Suitable and prepared strategies are needed to solve the writing problems.

Interesting strategy is needed to get students' attention in order to help the students in absorbing all the materials. Boundless (2014) argues, effective teaching strategies help to engage students in learning, develop critical thinking skills, and keep students on task. In brief, the teacher should employ interesting strategy in order to overcome the students' writing problems. One of the teaching strategies is mind map-picture series strategy which is combination between mind map as strategy and picture series as a media.

The consideration to employ mind map as strategy was based on Suyanto (2010) and Repelitawati (2011). Suyanto conducted an experimental study at *SMPN 1 Prambon Nganjuk* to know the effectiveness of mind map in improving the students' ability in writing descriptive text. He stated that the mean score of students who were taught using mind mapping (79.15) is higher than the one of those who were taught using modeling technique (76.3). While Repelitawati intended to use mind mapping as a strategy to improve seven grader students' ability in writing descriptive text. She reported that there were 82 % of the students (24 out of 29 students) passed 75 as the standard minimum score (KKM). From those results, it showed that mind map is an effective strategy to solve students' problem dealing with generating and constructing the ideas in

order to improve students' writing ability. However, Suyanto argues mind map is better used for the students who got high creativity. Thus, the researcher combines proper media to help the students who are lack in generating ideas.

The consideration in choosing picture series as media is based on Mudassir (2014) and Hartik (2014) conducted their study by using picture series. Mudassir conducted an experimental study in *SMP N 1 Pasuruan* to find out whether picture series could improve students' ability in writing recount text. He stated that the students who were taught writing using picture series significantly obtained higher scores in content and organization aspect rather than those who were taught writing without picture series. While Hartik proposed to conduct a classroom action research to improve students' ability in writing narrative text at *SMP N 21 Malang*. She explained that 75% of the students (33 out of 36 students) achieved score equal or greater than 75 as the standard minimum score (KKM).

From those result, it reveals that the use of picture series is able to overcome the students' problem in getting ideas and also with the vocabularies, in order to improve the students' ability in writing.

Based on those previous studies, the researcher wants to employ the combination of mind map as a strategy and picture series as a media, which is called as mind map-picture series strategy. The researcher has three reasons how mind map and picture series can be combined as a strategy. First, both of mind map and picture series can be used for pre-writing stage. Second, the two are interesting strategy. Third, the strategy can complete each other. Mind map can help to organize ideas while picture series can help to gather ideas. Related to

those reasons above, the researcher intends to overcome the students' problems in writing especially narrative texts at *SMP N 11 Malang* using Mind Map-Picture Series strategy. Thus, the researcher conducts this study entitled "Using Mind Map-Picture Series Strategy to Improve Students' Skill in Writing Narrative Text at SMP Negeri 11 Malang".

1.2 Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the problem of this study is formulated as: "How can mind map-picture series strategy improve students' ability in writing narrative text?"

1.3 Objective of the Study

This study aims at investigating how mind map-picture series strategy can improve students' ability in writing narrative text.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to provide significant contributions for the teachers, the school, and the other researcher.

1. For Teachers:

The finding of this study hopefully can be a valuable source to improve the quality of teaching and learning process especially for writing skill. The researcher expects this study can help to motivate the English teachers to make other instructional media or strategy to improve students' score.

2. For School:

The result of this study is expected to provide contribution on the improvement of teaching and learning process in order to improve students' ability in writing especially on writing narrative text.

3. For Other Researchers:

The future researchers are expected to use this study as additional information. If the future researchers find weaknesses in the strategy, they can develop it in order to make better studies. The future researchers are also expected to use mind map-picture series strategy for conducting a research to improve speaking skill or other language skills.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

In this study, the researcher needs to define some key terms to avoid misunderstanding and misconception. The important terms are defined as follows:

1.5.1 Writing ability: An ability to generate, organize, and develop idea becomes a good narrative text by using appropriate vocabulary and also grammar.

1.5.2 Narrative text: A kind of fable and myth story which have to be learnt by the eighth graders.

1.5.3 Mind Map-Picture Series Strategy: A strategy which is combination of mind map as strategy and picture series as a media which are used to improve students' ability in writing especially narrative text.