CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problems

The implementation of the School-Based Curriculum since the academic year of 2006/2007 has given an influence to the learning and teaching process. Schools are given full autonomy and responsibility in deciding their own visions, missions and objectives. They are also given the autonomy in deciding the materials for all of the entire subjects to be appropriate with their needs and the characteristics of the area where they are located.

It is clear that the vocational high school students need to learn English materials that are related to their programs. Unfortunately, all programs use the English learning materials that are not made specifically. Actually, the students of a vocational high school need English for specific purposes. They need English learning materials that are able to support their programs. In other words, the materials must be appropriate with their needs and characteristics.

One of the programs in SMK Negeri 1 Pajangan is the Informatics Technology Program. During the interview conducted by the researcher to the English teacher, the researcher found that the materials that were used in the Informatics Technology Program were considered inappropriate. The
materials could not fulfil the students’ needs. They wanted to master English that is related to the materials of the Informatics Technology Program.

Actually, the Informatics Technology Program has had the materials that can support their program but they have not had the English materials that are related to their program. Up to present, the school cannot provide them. In addition, there are few material designers who design the materials for them. So, there is a gap between need and supply. Consequently, the English teachers get difficulties to find the materials which are applicable to every program of a vocational high school whereas having suitable English learning materials is very important to to be able to communicate in the work area such as with the foreigner, understand the text related to their programs written in English, and interpret instructions in English related to the work area. In this case, the students must know some expressions related to Informatics technology, like informing the parts of a computer, the manual steps, description of the components. They also need to be able to understand the pictures or signs of instructions around the work area. Therefore, the students have to be able to communicate in a work area. The material should give them an ability to communicate with other people well.

Based on the observation, most of the students had low mastery of English. They understood some words and expressions of manual instructions to operate a computer, but they cannot communicate in English well. It can decrease the number of graduated students because of English is one of the main subjects in National Examination.
Based on the reason above, the study will discuss the design of English learning materials. The way that makes the students interested in learning English has to be considered. One way that can help the students appreciate and be more interested in learning English is by providing appropriate English materials. To fulfill the needs of learning materials, most of the schools in Indonesia usually use coursebooks. However, it still gives a problem because there are so many coursebooks which are not appropriate with their program. It is quite confusing because the schools have to choose the sources to get the suitable materials to be used.

The explanation of some problems above makes the researcher realize that providing the English materials is still needed since the materials provided in coursebooks or other sources that are used in the teaching learning process are still inappropriate especially in a vocational high school. Furthermore, the English materials are not developed based on the students’ needs and the contents do not represent the standard of contents stated in the School – Based Curriculum.

B. Identification of the Problems

As stated in the background of the study, appropriate materials really become a crucial issue that must be provided by teachers. The materials are used to facilitate the students in developing their language proficiency. The materials consist of the knowledge, skills, and attitude that must be learned by the students to achieve the standard of competence.
The students of a vocational high school have more intention to look for a job than continue their study to the university after they graduate from school. They need to be more creative and skillful to compete in a workplace. Nowadays, Indonesia has been one of Asia-Pacific countries that include to APFTA (Asia-Pacific Free Trade Area) program. It makes our citizens must struggle with the competition with foreigners more freely. Mastering English can be one of the skills that will help them in the future. Therefore, the development of English material at vocational high school must be done to fulfill their needs.

The problem in some vocational schools is lack of English learning materials that reflect their subject. The English materials are still too general and broad. The reason behind that is because the teachers have to follow the SK/KD of the vocational high school from BSNP for passing the National Examination (UNAS). Because it is the main focus, the English teacher in SMKN 1 Pajangan cannot be full concentrated for paying attention to the English for specific fields.

SMKN 1 Pajangan has internet facilities to hold an interactive and communicative English learning. However, the problem is the teachers there still do not use it maximally because the materials are inappropriate. Sometimes, they learn English by E-learning, but it does not work much because the materials are inappropriate with their program.

There are a lot of computers but they are useless because of the lack of appropriate materials for English in multimedia, computer system,
networking, and so forth. The materials will become an important thing for their future in facing the global era.

SMKN 1 Pajangan already had an excellent and a comfortable library. The library has a supported environment to be visited by the students. The students can increase their knowledge if they visit it regularly. They can use the library as a self-access learning centre but there are inappropriate materials for daily use.

In conclusion, there are two problems identified related to the topic. The first problem is related to low mastery of English. The second problem is the absence of appropriate materials for Informatics Technology Program that deal with activities in English stated above. In relation to such an issue, the specific English materials to the social contexts are urgent to be designed for vocational high school students.

C. Limitation of the Problems

Based on the identification of the problem above there are two problems identified. One of them is related to the materials. The students need materials that will enable them to communicate in English well.

In this study, the researcher designs the English materials for Grade ten students of Informatics technology program. It is important to improve their four English skills since they will continue their next step to the work area. The English materials will be designed based on the Standard of
Competence and the Basic of Competence of English skills from the School-Based Curriculum.

D. Formulation of the Problems

The background, the identification, and the limitation of the problem above have guided the researcher to formulate the problem of the study as follows:

1. What are the targets’ needs of Grade Ten students of Informatics Technology Program at SMKN 1 Pajangan in learning English?
2. What are the learning needs of Grade Ten students of Informatics Technology Program at SMKN 1 Pajangan in learning English?
3. What are the appropriate English learning materials for Grade Ten students of SMKN 1 Pajangan in learning English?

E. Objectives of the Study

Based on the formulation of the problem above, the objectives of this study are:

1. to identify the target’s needs of Grade Ten students of Informatics Technology Program at SMKN 1 Pajangan in learning English,
2. to identify the learning needs of Grade Ten students of Informatics Technology Program at SMKN 1 Pajangan in learning English,
3. to develop appropriate English learning materials for Grade Ten students of SMKN 1 Pajangan.
F. Significances of the study

The writer expects that:

1. The result of the study will be useful for Grade Ten students of Informatics Technology Program to develop their English skills,

2. The result of the study will be useful for the English teachers of Informatics Technology Program in providing relevant English learning materials for their students,

3. The result of this study will encourage other English Language Education students to conduct similar research on the different fields of the study,

4. The result of this study will encourage material designers to design materials that are appropriate for the students’ need of English, and

5. The result of this study will encourage the government to compose specific English curriculums for all departments of SMK in Indonesia.