

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

There are four skills in teaching and learning English: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Those skills are related to each other and cannot be independent; therefore, learners need to master all of the four skills. This is supported by Uma and Ponnambala (2001) who state that mastering language skills will determine the students' communicative competence in the target language.

One of productive skills which is very important to be mastered by English learners is writing skill. Richard and Renandya (2002: 303) state that writing is the most difficult skill for second language and foreign language learners. Furthermore, they claim that writing is not only generating and organizing ideas of our mind, but also translating these ideas into a readable text. Based on their arguments, it seems common that many learners particularly those of foreign language learners have some degrees of difficulties in writing. Therefore, some efforts need to be done in order to maintain or improve the students' writing skill.

There is no hesitation that writing skill gives many contributions in the literary world. Brown (2004: 218) states that writing skill has become indispensable and has high significance in this global literature. As it has been known that business transactions, records, legal documents, political and military agreements are written by those who are expert in their field with sound knowledge of writing skill. Besides, it is also apparent that in the literate culture

nowadays, some degree of writing skill has become a prerequisite requirement for getting employment.

In teaching and learning processes, learners have different abilities in mastering the four skills of English. This is due to the fact that different learners have different capabilities as well as incapability in learning language, including English. According to River (1981: 291), many students who have studied for six or more years of second or foreign language are still unable to express themselves in a clear, correct and comprehensible manner in the target language through the four skills, including writing skill.

Due to the complicated nature of writing activities, many students tend to face constraints in developing their writing skill. Some teaching practitioners (e.g. Ong, 2011; River, 1981: 291) assume that examination papers in composition of the world are, with few exceptions, disappointing. In addition, Ong (2011) states that in spite of the remarkable progress in the English learning process, writing skills still become the weakest area in the students' overall performance. It is argued that writing exercises only keep students busy and out of mischief. Besides, exercises given are mostly of conventional type in which it is easy to construct. The inexperienced or poorly qualified teacher may take them directly from textbook, with which an answer booklet is usually provided. They may often be corrected as a group procedure in the classroom, and they yield a wide spread of evaluative grades for the teacher's records. In response to such practices, it is therefore reasonable that students acquire difficulties in improving their writing skill.

On the teaching and learning process of writing, there are some kinds of media: visual media, audio media and audiovisual media used to improve the students' writing skill. The use of those media is expected to minimize the students' constraints in writing mentioned above. For that reason, the researcher applied movies that are expected to improve students' writing skill. It is because movies can help the students explore and develop ideas as well as contents to write. In addition, a movie can guide the students to construct their texts through its story. Related to this, Champoux (2003) states that movies in literature studies suggest some unique features that make them uncommonly powerful learning tools. Some unique aspects of movies let the media show organizational behavior and management concepts in an uncommonly powerful way. It is also argued that these aspects of movies will help students understand how viewing movies can improve their learning.

This study tries to propose a solution as a way to improve the learners' writing skill. The teaching of writing skill must be innovative and attractive in order to get effective learning outcomes. Reflecting on the students' problems related to writing skill, the use of movies in teaching writing should be attempted to minimize those constraints on their learning process.

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the background of the study above, it is revealed that there are some influential and manageable factors in teaching and learning writing skill. Those factors are elaborated as follows.

1) Students

Students are one of the important elements in the teaching and learning process. They are the subjects of the learning process. Yet, learning process is of a complicated nature. To perform well in this process, students are likely to be affected by some factors: motivation, interest, intelligence, socio-cultural background, learning styles and learning strategies.

The above factors either directly or indirectly influence the students' abilities in the writing process. As for example, students with high motivation or interest and good learning styles or learning strategies commonly achieve better outcomes in their writing tasks. On the contrary, the students who do not have positive influences of those factors may fail and find constraints in their writing.

To stimulate the students' writing, some efforts need to be carried out. The writing activities should really consider the above factors in order to get positive impacts of those factors. It can be done by implementing a writing activity using developed input as an effort to keep the students' interest in their writing process.

2). Materials

It has been known that materials facilitate the students in their learning process. The examples of materials used are cassettes, videos, dictionaries, grammar books, readers, and course books. Furthermore, the materials should comply with the aims of the study in order to achieve the learning goals.

The teaching materials of writing skill need to be authentic, but fascinating to the students' level, needs and capacity. Also, the teacher should be able to choose the materials which stimulate the students' involvements and understanding to get the objectives of study effectively and efficiently.

3). Media

Media belong to the fundamental components on the teaching and learning process. However, many teachers still use conventional media, for example blackboard, board marker, and module for teaching. It is commonly believed that the use of conventional media seemingly does not explore the students' potential properly in a learning process, including writing.

Media are important components in the teaching and learning process. According to Djamarah and Zain (2006: 121), a medium for learning is defined as a learning source that is used to help teachers to develop students' knowledge. They state that the teachers can explain the materials using the learning media in a more concrete way.

In general, there are three kinds of media: 1) visual media, for example, pictures, photos, 2) audio media, for example, tape recorder, cassettes, radio and 3) audiovisual media, for example, movies, videos. Yet, among the three kinds of

media, audiovisual media, especially movies, is still rarely used in the teaching writing.

In the writing process, the use of audiovisual media, for example movies have some significances. At the most it may help to create writing activities. This is because movies facilitate the transmission of information from the teacher to the students in a more attractive way. Movies also contain instructional materials that stimulate the students to write smoothly. As a result, the use of movies in the teaching writing needs to be selected based on some criteria. The movie should be communicative, attractive, genre-based and relevant to the materials taught.

Considering the significances of movies for teaching writing as mentioned above, communicative cartoon movies are selected as media to teach writing. The communicative cartoon movies are kinds of cartoon movies which are communicative and which present several types of genre: recount and narrative genre. Therefore, communicative cartoon movies are hoped to be effective media because they can give proper and necessary thoughts or ideas to students in order to write competently.

4). Methods

Methods are ways the teachers use to teach students in the learning process. Teacher must really consider what methods that will be put into practice which are proper to the objectives of the learning process. As indicated by Brown (2001: 16) who defines a method as a generalized set of classroom specifications for accomplishing linguistic objectives. Furthermore, he states that methods primarily tend to be concerned with teachers and students' roles and behaviors,

and secondarily with features such as objectives of learning grammar, sequencing, and materials.

Methods used in the teaching of writing skill are commonly not varied. Teachers tend to use conventional methods, i.e. using modules during the learning process without considering any additional materials from other sources. As the result, the conventional method that is predominantly applied may not create an attractive and motivated writing process to the students. Moreover, the method should be selected based on its appropriateness and effectiveness to the learning process so that its use will enable the teacher to explore the students' ideas and to help them write in a better way.

5). Teachers

Teachers play many roles in the teaching and learning process, including leading and managing the students' learning process. In line with this, Brown (2001: 167) points out that the roles of teachers are as controller, director, manager, facilitator and the resources within the learning process.

Not all teachers are qualified to teach writing skill. As for example, some teachers cannot arouse the students' motivation and interest to engage in the writing activities. Also, many teachers cannot create a good atmosphere to stimulate the students' self initiative in exploring their ideas into writing. Besides, many teachers do not implement an appropriate and effective method and media on the teaching of writing skill. It is proved by the use of conventional method and media which is still common.

In teaching writing skill, the teachers need to know the students' needs and abilities. This is necessary as they ought to consider what to teach and how to teach writing to the students. Also, they are required to be creative and innovative in developing inputs to explore the students' writing potencies.

It has been known that writing skill is taught at all levels of English learning. They are elementary school, junior high school, senior high school and university. Furthermore, the students' writing skill at those levels of study is affected by the factors above. Those mentioned factors are students, materials, media, methods and teachers. Those factors can give both positive and negative effects to students' writing skill. The better the factors influence the student's writing skill, the better the outcomes produced by the students.

C. Delimitation of the Problem

Because of the wide area of the problems, all of the problems cannot be identified as the problems of this study. Therefore, the researcher decides to focus on the effect of using communicative cartoon movies on the teaching of writing skill. This is because the use of the media can assist the students to cope with some constraints they face in writing. Besides, through the use of the media, teachers can transmit the teaching materials in a more attractive way so that they are easily understood by the students.

Based on the explanation above, this study uses communicative cartoon movies as an alternative solution to teach writing. Through the use of the media, it is expected that students are guided to write the movie story based on a genre

which is taught. By this, it is hoped that they will learn how to write orderly and at last by steps, they will learn to write independently, without guidance.

In this study, the researcher selected the second grade of SMPN I Arjosari because from the observation done prior to the study, it revealed that the English teacher still used the conventional media and a course book in the teaching of writing skill without adding any materials from other resources. In addition to that, the students tended to spend much time for doing exercises of the course book rather than practicing writing through topics or themes. It is for example, the students did exercises or tasks of grammar and answered questions based on a text during the learning process of writing.

D. Formulation of the Problem

1. What is the writing skill of the students taught using Communicative Cartoon Movies like?
2. What is the writing skill of the students taught without using Communicative Cartoon Movies like?
3. Is there any significant difference on the students' writing skill between students taught using communicative cartoon movies and students taught without using communicative cartoon movies?

E. Objectives of the Study

1. To describe the writing skill of the students taught using communicative cartoon movies.
2. To describe the writing skill of the students taught without using communicative cartoon movies.
3. To predict whether there is a significant difference on the students' writing skill between students taught using communicative cartoon movies and students taught without using communicative cartoon movies.

G. The Significance of the Study

a. Scientific Significance:

This research is expected to develop knowledge in an educational area, especially in the use of communicative cartoon movies on the teaching of writing skill. The knowledge is hoped to contribute a progress of theories in improving students' writing skill.

b. Practical Significance

- 1). *For the Department/ School:* This study can be used as a reference to conduct a relevant study.
- 2). *For the Lecturers/ Teachers:* This study can be an additional resource in improving writing skill through the use of communicative cartoon movies. This is because this study helps the lectures/teachers to consider appropriate media to enhance the teaching of writing skill.
- 3). *For the Students:* This study attempts to obtain a solution to help the students to improve their writing skill.