

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. Background of the Study

Nowadays, in this globalization era, English is considered as one of the most common subjects that Indonesian students learn. It is assumed that competition between one country and another will be definitely hard, that is why English is considered as the most important subject to learn. English plays an important role in assisting Indonesian human resources, so it cannot be denied that English is actually the most important minimum requirement ability in facing the globalization era.

English plays an important role in assisting the Indonesian human resources in globalization era, that is why students tend to be more active in the English teaching learning process. They have to be more active in responding teachers' explanation and gather any related supporting information the teacher gave them in the classroom. Learning English as a foreign language is obviously not as easy as what it looks like. It may need a long time and process to master the language so the students are able to communicate with it. Realizing the importance of learning English as an international language, the Indonesian Ministry of National Education stated that English should be added to the school curriculum.

Nowadays, English is not only taught in Senior High School (SMA/MA) or Vocational High School (SMK) but it is widely taught to other stages in every grade like Junior High School (SMP/MTS), Elementary School (SD) and even to Kindergarten (TK). Since it is actually an additional subject, English is officially taught starting from Junior High School and it will be intensively taught at Senior High School.

According to the school-based curriculum (KTSP 2006), the process of teaching and learning English covers receptive and productive skills. Receptive skills include reading and listening, while productive skills include speaking and writing. It is obviously related with the English teaching and learning process in the senior high school. There are four skills taught in senior high school, they are: listening, speaking, reading and writing. As stated in the school-based curriculum, the aim of teaching and learning English is to achieve communicative competence (BNSP, 2006). It means that the students should be able to use English both in spoken and written language.

In productive skills, speaking and writing, written language tends to be more difficult and complicated for the students to learn because it needs greater emphasis on accuracy rather than on the spoken language. On the spoken language, errors are tolerable as long as both of the speaker and the listener understand each other. Besides, the speaker can directly rephrase and correct any mistakes if they realize it. On the other hand, in written language, errors can be clearly seen. Since the fact shows that written product can be categorized as a

formal language, that is why improving students' written products is the main issue which need to be solved as soon as possible.

From the statement above, it can be concluded that writing is one of the most difficult skills to learn. That is why errors usually occur in writing. In written language, most of the students are usually having the same common errors, such as; grammar, punctuation and vocabulary. To minimize students' errors, giving feedback is one of the most effective ways to be applied.

Supporting the statement above, Gower, Philips and Walter (1995: 163) writes that giving feedback is one of the most important responsibilities of a teacher. Further, Ashwell (2000) writes that teacher believes that correcting the grammar of students written product will help them improve the accuracy of subsequent writing. Therefore, since feedback is considered as the most effective way to minimize students errors, in writing process especially, it would be better for the teacher to apply it in the English teaching and learning process.

Based on the pre-observation conducted at SMAN 1 Pleret, there are some problems found in the writing learning process. First, after correcting daily test, the teacher returned all of the result back to the students. Ironically, the teacher only put some scores in it without any information that indicates the errors students had made and there is also no correction given by the teacher. Second, the teacher did not ask the students to revise their writing. As a result, if the students who make errors are not aware of their errors, they may commit the same errors next time.

Based on the problems that are found in the English teaching and learning process of writing at SMAN 1 Pleret, it is regarded to be necessary to reveal whether feedback is a good method that can improve students writing ability. The aim of this study is to know the effectiveness of giving feedback to improve the writing ability of the tenth grade students at SMAN 1 Pleret in the academic year of 2011/2012.

A. Identification of the Problems

Based on the explanation stated on the background of the problem, it is found that there are actually some factors which may influence students' writing ability. In identifying the problems, the researcher interviewed some people including the English teacher and students as the subject of the research to gather any particular information related to the research. Observation is also conducted to the English teaching-learning processes in the classroom. Based on the pre-observation conducted by the researcher in the English teaching-learning process at SMAN 1 Pleret, there were some problems that can be identified as follows.

The first problem was related to the teacher. Hyland (2002: 197) writes that students may consider teachers' feedback as an important element to develop their writing, while some others may take it as if there are actually no differences on their writing but an insult given by the teacher. Thus, here the teacher acts as a facilitator who provides an appropriate feedback to the students. It means that the teachers have to master all of the materials they taught and they have to be able to correct any mistakes occurred on the English teaching and learning process. Teachers have to know how to give an appropriate feedback for the students. The

fact shows that some of the English teachers at SMAN 1 Pleret are adequate in doing such thing, so it would be better if they implement the method. After the implementation of the method, it is expected that it will improve the students' writing ability.

The second problem was related to the students. Students are one of the aspects that determine the quality of English teaching learning process in a classroom. Students also play important roles in the teaching and learning process of writing. Sugeng in Qorina (2004: 4) writes that students are independent human beings who have their own strength, weakness, feeling, attitude, hopes, aspiration, beliefs, values and needs. Competency and personality are the examples of students' aspects. One of the aspects of students' competencies is cognitive. The cognitive competency includes knowledge and intelligence. The knowledge is related to the knowledge of English subject and non-English subject. The intelligence is the power of learning, understanding and reasoning. This competency is also related to the creativity, talent and learning style. It is determined by the knowledge that the students have. With an adequate knowledge, it will be easier for students to understand and to comprehend the material they are learning, so they will be motivated to participate and to interact in teaching learning process. In fact, there are many tenth grade students at SMAN 1 Pleret who are lack of knowledge and motivation, so they cannot find the best method for them in the process of English teaching learning, especially in writing which is classified as the most difficult language skill to learn.

In relation with the students of SMAN 1 Pleret, their cognitive competency can be classified as if it is still far beyond the expectation, especially on writing mastery. They obviously have a low competence in writing. It can be clearly seen when the researcher did his pre-observation at SMAN I Pleret. The researcher found that most of the students are in difficulties in writing. It is difficult for them to make a good and well structured sentence in English. Besides, the researcher found that some of the students showed a negative attitude during the English teaching and learning process. They tended to ignore the teacher and they did not pay attention when the teacher explained the material and even some of them tried to get their friends' attention by shouting their name.

The third problem was related to the facilities. Based on the pre-observation conducted by the researcher, it is found that SMAN I Pleret had a very limited facility. Furthermore, the teacher also rarely used the limited facility available in that school. That obviously made the situation during the English teaching and learning process even worse. Besides, the fact shows that facility is one of the most important aspects which are needed in the English teaching and learning process, in writing session especially. Supporting aids such as charts, Over Head Projectors, maps and any other laboratory tools are some of the facilities which may improve the English teaching and learning process in the classroom. A teaching and learning process which is supported by those equipments will obviously improve the students' interest in learning English. An Over Head Projector, for instance, can be used to develop students' writing skill.

Besides, it may lead students' involvement as the students find the lesson is interesting.

The fourth problem is related to the media. Most of the teachers only used limited media such as Lembar Kerja Siswa (LKS) and one standard hand book in delivering the materials. Most of them said that it was caused by the lack of school's facilities. Besides, most of them rarely made interesting media in the English teaching learning process because they had no time to make it. Media is one of the important factors which may determine the success of the teaching and learning process. The students' interest in learning English can be increased through an attractive and interesting media.

The fifth problem is related to the techniques. Techniques are the ways of the teacher to create such a good, interactive, and interesting English teaching and learning process in the classroom. Most of the English teachers apply monotonous and uninteresting techniques; it may decrease the students' interest in the English teaching and learning process. There are many techniques that can be used by the English teacher in teaching writing to the students. Most of the teachers used the Indonesian to English translation method. It obviously does not help the students to comprehend the written text easily. It would be better for the teacher to choose a technique that can help the students in improving their understanding and minimize their mistakes in writing.

Feedback is actually a tool which is meant to enhance students' motivation and understanding in learning English in the classroom, in writing activity especially. Giving feedback or showing any mistakes conducted by the students in

writing was meant to help the students in how to create well organized sentences. The writer believes that giving feedback is a good technique in conducting writing activity. By conducting a classroom action research which implements the method, it is expected that the teacher will be able to improve the students' writing ability.

B. Limitation of the Problem

From the discussion in the background of the study and the identification of the problem, the researcher found that there are some problems all of which are impossible for the researcher to solve. Therefore, the researcher limits the problems into a more specific one that is related to the use of teaching technique, that is the effectiveness of giving feedback to improve students' writing ability.

C. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the background of the study above, as well as the identification of the problem and the limitation of the problem presented before, the problem of this study can be formulated as follows. Does feedback effectively improve the writing ability of the tenth grade students at SMAN 1 Pleret in the academic year of 2011/2012?

D. Objective of the Study

Related to the formulation of the problem above, the objective of this study is to improve the writing ability of the tenth grade students at SMAN 1 Pleret in the academic year of 2011/2012 by using feedback.

E. Significances of the research

There are some expected advantages that can be acquired from this study:

1. For the school principal of SMAN 1 Pleret, it can be functioned as a first step to the efforts in improving students' achievement.
2. For the English teachers of SMAN 1 Pleret, it is expected that right after knowing the result of this study they can improve their quality in teaching technique especially in giving feedback, so they can improve students writing ability.
3. For the students of SMAN 1 Pleret, it will help the students to improve their interest in learning English in general and also improving their writing ability.
4. For the other researcher, it is expected that it can broaden the knowledge of the other researcher about how to improve students' writing ability by using feedback and this hopefully this study can inspire them to do further research to enrich the existing study.