

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Background of the Study**

Based on School Based Curriculum Year 2006, English becomes the important subject which is taught to all junior high school students in Indonesia. It develops students' intellectual, social, and emotional competences. Students will be able to recognize their self and culture. It will help students to express their idea and feeling. English also becomes a subject which determines students' graduation. Passing the standard score of English examination becomes one of the requirements for the students' graduation.

One of the objectives of English learning in junior high schools stated in standard of content for junior high schools regulated by the Ministerial Education Regulation No. 22/ 2006 is developing students' communicative competences in oral and written forms to achieve the functional level of literacy. Particularly in written form, junior high school students should have the competency to comprehend and/or produce written texts. The texts are commonly found with various forms in the daily life contexts. They can be procedure, descriptive, recount, narrative, and report.

Written texts are closely related to reading and writing skills which are very important for students in their education. These skills fall in the context of mother

language learning. Students can learn by writing and reading and a teacher can teach by reading and writing or having students read or write (Bloom in Durukan, 2007).

Both of the skills, reading and writing, are connected through a written cycle. In this cycle, the teaching of reading and writing are better done simultaneously. In this case, the activity of reading helps students have incidental contact with the roles of grammar. Students develop a sense for the structure of the language and grammar and increase their vocabulary. Meanwhile, writing helps students to develop phonic knowledge and enhance reading fluency. It is supported by a study conducted by Stenner, et.al (2007) reporting that those skills are complementary. In addition, the growth in one skill inevitably leads to growth in the other skills (i.e., students become better readers by strengthening their writing skills).

However, based on the preliminary observation in VIII B Class of MTs YAPI Pakem, the students found reading and writing in English the most difficult skills to master. They could not understand the content of the reading texts well. For example, after reading a text, they did not manage to tell what the text was about. Furthermore, they could not answer the questions related to the text correctly. The condition influences other students' English skill, writing. They found it difficult to write texts in English since they had not understood the texts well. For example, when they wanted to write, they felt confused about what and how to write the texts. This difficulty was caused by some problems. The problems arose from some factors such as the teaching method, the teacher, and the students.

In term of teaching method, there were some problems to consider. In teaching, the teacher conducted a conventional method which gave less opportunity to the students to explore the materials actively. She lectured, explained grammar points, conducted drills, and at best led whole-class discussions in which each students got a few seconds of a class period to talk. She played a central role in the class and forgot that a good learning process is a social activity and is the outcome of collaboration between the teacher and the students and between the student and other students in the group. Many students were passive and bored during the learning process. As a result, the students could not develop their reading and writing skills optimally.

The problem dealing with the reading and writing learning process in English also came from the teacher. She had little experience in teaching English since she has different education background which is not English. Therefore, the teacher needs information and experience in implementing appropriate teaching methods for specific learning environment.

The other problem arose from the students' side. The students had low motivation in learning reading and writing in English. They found reading and writing as difficult skills to master. One of the reasons is the students' confusion in comprehending the texts. Since a text is longer than just a word or a sentence and contains a series of sentences connected to one another by grammar, vocabulary, and knowledge of the words makes reading and writing as complicated processes which should be learnt by the students. Further, they considered reading and writing as a

boring activity because of the conventional teaching method. Therefore, they have no strong desire to learn English.

Besides, the students felt a strong fear of reading, especially reading aloud, and writing in English since it would be so starkly displayed on public. For example, when the teacher asked one of the students to read the text aloud individually among the students, he was not confident and did not want to read. In writing, the students did not want to show their writing to others since they were worried about what other students may perceive as criticism and rejection. It was due to the nature of written language which is permanent and can be read and reread as often as any one likes. This condition made insecure learning and tended to drop off students' motivation in learning.

In addition, the class is categorized as a large class consisted of 39 students. Each student has unique needs and abilities. The most salient individual difference in the class is a range of proficiency level across the class and differences among students especially in writing and reading abilities. The teacher found it hard to apply the appropriate teaching technique for reading and writing which were suitable for students. Consequently, the conventional teaching techniques used nowadays could not help students with various abilities to accomplish the teaching goals.

Considering the facts above, the teacher need to search effective ways to improve the teaching and learning process of reading and writing in English at Class VIII B of MTs YAPI. One of the methods which is appropriate to be applied in the

teaching and learning process is cooperative learning. Cooperative learning can be defined as a learning approach in which small, mixed student groups form both inside the class and outside the class environments to ensure students helping each other in learning an academic subject in the scope of a common goal; where their self esteem increases and their communication, problem solving and critical thinking skills develop; and where they actively participate in the teaching-learning process (Cohen et al, 2004).

One of the techniques of cooperative learning method which is appropriate to develop students' reading and writing skills in English is Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC). The technique presents a structure that increases not only opportunities for direct teaching in reading and writing but also applicability of composition writing techniques. (Slavin, 2002:89)

CIRC technique is developed to support conventionally used skill based reading groups approach. Reading groups are established in the classroom. When the teacher works with a reading group, couples try to teach each other meaningful reading and writing skills. They help each other in performing basic skill-building activities (such as oral reading, contextual guessing, asking questions, summarizing, writing composition based on the story, and revising-correcting composition). Teams are rewarded for all reading and writing assignments on the basis of the average performance of group members. Thus equal change for achievement, group support

for achievement, and the performance, all basic components of cooperative learning ensure realization of personal responsibility (Slavin, 1980) .

Based on the explanation above and due to the problems in the teaching and learning process of reading and writing in English at Class B of MTs YAPI, Pakem, Sleman, Yogyakarta, the writer was interested to conduct a research on “Improving the Teaching and Learning Process of Reading and Writing in English through Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) at Class VIII B of MTs YAPI, Pakem, Sleman, Yogyakarta in the 2011/ 2012 Academic Year. ”

## **B. Identification of the Problems**

Based on what the writer has been discussed in the background of the problems, there were some problems in the teaching learning process at Class VIII B of MTs. YAPI Pakem, Sleman, Yogyakarta that could be identified as follow:

1. The teacher applied a conventional method which gave less opportunity to the students to explore the materials actively. She played a central role in the class. As a result, students were bored and passive.
2. The teacher had little experience in teaching English since she has different education background which is not English. Therefore, the teacher needs information and experience in applying appropriate teaching methods for specific learning environment.
3. The students had low motivation in learning reading and writing in English. They found reading and writing as difficult skills to master. They considered reading

and writing as a boring activity because of the conventional method in teaching reading and writing. Therefore, they had no strong desire to learn English.

4. The students felt a strong fear of reading, especially reading aloud, and writing in English since it would be so starkly displayed on public.
5. The teaching techniques used which were conventional could not help students with various abilities to accomplish the teaching goals.
6. The class was large therefore students' opportunities to speak and involve in the learning process are lessened.

### **C. Limitation of the Problem**

As explained in the background of the problem, the researcher puts the limitation of the problems on the problems of reading and writing in English and the efforts to improve the teaching and learning processes of reading and writing at Grade VIII B of MTs YAPI Pakem, Sleman, Yogyakarta in the academic year of 2011/2012.

### **D. Formulation of the Problem**

The problem in this research is formulated as follows: How can the teaching and learning processes of reading and writing in English be improved through CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) at Grade VIII B of MTs YAPI Pakem, Sleman, Yogyakarta in the academic year of 2011/2012?

### **E. Objective of the Study**

The objective of this research is to improve the teaching and learning processes of reading and writing in English through CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) at Grade VIII MTs YAPI Pakem, Sleman, Yogyakarta in the academic year of 2011/2012.

### **F. Significance of the Study**

This research hopefully gives contributions to:

1. The English teacher, as a reference to strive for innovation in developing the teaching of reading and writing.
2. The students, to give experience and new challenges as an effort to develop their reading and writing skills.
3. English Education Department, Yogyakarta State University.

As the institution concerned with the profession of teachers, the researcher gives information about the implementation of CIRC as an effort to improve the teaching and learning process of reading and writing in English, so teachers have consideration to implement the technique which is useful to improve the quality of English teaching and learning process.