

Chapter One

Introduction

Research Background

The practice of teaching writing in Indonesia still have many shortcomings and drawbacks. Based on a study by Megaiab (2014), writing skills of Indonesian High School students still need a lot of improvement. They have many problems, starting from punctuation and capitalization up to grammatical matters such as spelling, prepositions, articles, verbs, and tenses. Setyono's study (2014) also reveals that some English classes in Jember fail to give students suitable knowledge and exercise of writing skills. Teachers do not apply process based approach in teaching writing. They only check students' final products for giving comments and analysing students' writing skills progress. Instead of using students' writings as a measurement of students' achievement, they take students' writing scores from formative test. Both acquiring and teaching writing skills are not easy and it needs extra effort.

Literature provides authentic language which can be used to develop four skills in English language learning. As mentioned by Hişmanoğlu (2005) and Premawardhena (2007), literature has a great value and effects for students in order to develop their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. Research has proved that literature helps teachers in building students language skills particularly reading and writing skills (Vural, 2013). A study in South Korea by Kim has proved that to make progress on writing ability, students consider

“literature-based English instruction” as an appropriate and advantageous approach (Kim, 2010).

Non-native literature, Indonesian literature in particular, is a promising learning material for EFL classroom. Alwasilah (2006), Florentino (2014), Gray (2005), Kirkpatrick (2008), Parsaiyan, Ghajar, Salahimoghaddam, and Janahmadi (2014), and Prastiwi (2013) have acknowledged the importance of translated first language literature through their research. At least, there are three strengths of this type of literature.

First, compared to native literature, translated first language literature is more comprehensible for foreign language students. The characters, places and cultures are more familiar, so they are more easy to be identified. Once students get familiar with the basic elements of the story, they are supposed to find less difficulties in understanding the following storyline. Gray (2005) has explained the greater value of this literature over the other type of literature in his study. It supports build-up the retention and apprehension of the target language. First language literature is a significant part of student’s cultural heritage, so they are usually confident in expressing their views because their views are sturdy. After students can read translated version of non-native literary texts comfortably, students are ready to learn native literary texts which is equipped with the cultural information (Gray, 2005).

Second, first language literature is rich of cultures, wisdom and values originated from student’s country. Using this type of literature facilitates students to learn more about their own identity and develop their literacy appreciation.

According to Prastiwi's (2013) study, "learning the target language (L2) can be a means of learning C1 (culture of the language learners) instead of associating with and emphasizing on learning C2 (culture of the target language)" (p. 512).

Students' native literature give a huge opportunity for them to gain a deeper and better understanding about their own national or local identity such as cultures, values, beliefs, wisdoms, etc (Florentino, 2014; Parsaiyan et al., 2014). As stated by Alwasilah (2006), local literature contains local wisdom which can be taught to students and its inclusion as learning material promisingly increases students' literary appreciation both literature in native language and foreign language. Ideally, if students value their own local literature, they can also value foreign literature.

Last, non-native literary works, originally the one which comes from student's nation, is beneficial and helpful for improving student's productive skills. To be able to communicate globally using english, people needs to know the general custom and belief of foreign people. Equally important, people have to be aware of their own culture in order to be able to share information about themselves (Kirkpatrick, 2008). Parsaiyan et al. (2014) has argued that students' understanding about national or local identity will make them capable to produce or reproduce "a 'familiar' language—the language which comes from their everyday lives and rooted in their beliefs, values, collective literary and spiritual legacy" (p. 106). Moreover, ethnic literature which is not even translated to the target culture also can be advantageous for teaching productive skills in EFL context. Alwasilah's (2006) study demonstrates the following finding:

Ethnic literature can be incorporated into writing courses. Students learn not only how to write but also how to appreciate their ethnic literature.

Through well-designed assignments such as reading for reproduction and writing literary criticism, students gain a heightened appreciation of the richness and vitality of the ethnic literature, and at the same time develop high confidence in writing in a foreign language. (p. 23)

Most of studies discussing about literature have discussed why literature should be integrated into language classroom, but only a few researches has conducted research about translated literature or explained how to integrate literature into language classroom especially to master language skills. Even though the teacher of a Private High School in Yogyakarta had ever taught using folktales, they had never taught using novel, short story, poem, or plays in language learning. Since they have many advantages for improving students' language skills and there is little exposure to literature in the classroom, I chose to conduct a research in this school. I organised a research entitled "Integrating Translated Version of Indonesian Literature to Writing Class at a Private Senior High School in Yogyakarta: An Action Research".

Identification of Problems

Based on the English syllabus using KTSP (*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan*) curriculum, one of writing competencies which should be achieved by Senior High School students is expressing ideas through writing texts accurately, fluently, and contextually. Both teachers and students find difficulties

in achieving this goal due to various reasons for instance, the English teachers and students of a Private Senior High School in Yogyakarta.

After conducting a preliminary research in this school, I found some issues related to the teaching and learning process of English and to be specific, there are six problems found related to the teaching and learning process of writing skills. First, writing skills are still considered less important than other skills. Teachers give priority to teach reading, listening, and speaking skills because those skills are commonly tested in examinations. Second, time allocation for teaching writing skills are not much. Eventhough the teacher has given additional time for teaching writing, it is still considered inadequate to solve students' writing problems. Third, students find writing as a difficult task because they are lack of vocabulary. Fourth, students also have problems in translating their first language to the target language (English). Fifth, most of the students can not write sentences in correct formation. They do not really understand basic rules of writing such as concord, subject-verb agreement, word order, verb changes in different tenses, let alone structure of simple, compound, and complex sentences. The last problem is developing ideas. According to teacher's judgement, students have already been able to generate ideas, but developing the ideas into paragraphs is still difficult for them.

Related to problems mentioned before, I conducted an action research in the form of writing class which employs the integration of literature at a Private Senior High School in Yogyakarta. An Indonesian novel, *Keluarga Cemara*

which had been translated into English as Cemara's Family, is chosen as the main reading and writing material for students.

Limitation of Problem

I narrowed the scope of the problems in this research, to conduct writing class focusing on composing one kind of text which was personal narrative text. Also, it was limited to integrate only one type of literature which is translated first language novel specifically Indonesian novel. Among writing problems had been mentioned earlier, this action research focused on solving two main problems which are suggested by the teachers. They are related to sentence formation and paragraph development.

The idea about how far literature can help teachers to solve the existing problems in a Private High School in Yogyakarta was investigated. Considering the suitability and availability of the participants, eleventh grade students were chosen as the participants of this action research.

Research Questions

Based on the background and the problems addressed before, I formulate two questions to be investigated in this research.

1. How does the integration of translated version of Indonesian literature help to solve writing problems experienced by students of a Private Senior High School in Yogyakarta?
2. What are students of a Private Senior High School in Yogyakarta responses to the integration of translated version of Indonesian literature in their writing class?

Research Objectives

Regarding to the research questions formulated above, the objectives of this research are:

1. To explore how translated version of Indonesian literature help to solve writing problems experienced by students of a Private Senior High School in Yogyakarta
2. To investigate students of a Private Senior High School in Yogyakarta responses about the integration of translated version of Indonesian literature in their writing class

Research Significances

This action research is hopefully beneficial to the following people:

For the researcher. Through this research, hopefully I am able to gain a deeper understanding about writing skills, literature and how to teach writing skills using literature.

For students. By introducing students participated in this research to the literary work, I expect that students do not only get useful writing knowledge and practices during the classes, but also develop their love for reading both their first language literature and English literature.

For teachers. The techniques used here hopefully can inspire teachers to integrate literature for teaching writing skills in their own classes. Some of the evaluations are also beneficial for teachers who have already incorporated literature in their language classes to reflect and to improve the teaching-learning process.

For future researchers. I hope that the result of this research can be a good reference for other researchers to conduct future research about literature and its inclusion in language classes, particularly translated non-native literature. Researches discussing this topic are still considered few although it is really interesting and important.