

Chapter One

Introduction

The points that will be discussed in this chapter are the background of the study, the statement of the problems, the scope of the problem, the research questions, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, and the outline of the research.

Background of the Study

Mastering language skills are needed in using a language. Saragih, Silalahi, and Pardede (2014) asserted that in order to be able to communicate and socialize with a group of people, every person should be able to master the four basic skills in using the language; speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It means that every person is able to convey their messages, thoughts, and feelings by using a language skill. By mastering the language skills, people will be able to comprehend and use a language easily. Besides, people will be more easily to convey a message when they master the language skills well.

Writing is one of the basic language skills that should be mastered by every person. Writing is a form of written communication which is important in many things such as academic field, business field, and political field. For example, in academic field, writing is needed for students to produce an academic writing. The form of academic writing can be an essay or a report. Students must be able to write well in order to make a good academic writing by considering the aspects of writing such as content, grammar, word choices, syntax, organization,

and mechanics. Therefore, writing is a language skill that students obligate to master.

Writing is also challenging for some students. These days, there are several problems that many students face in their writing such as lack of motivation, lack of idea, and lack of grammar knowledge. First, many students in these days are lazy when they are asked to write anything. As I have experienced, I felt that I did not have a mood when the teacher asked me to write. That problem is caused by lacking of motivation. Students do not have enough motivation in writing so that they feel lazy when they have a writing task.

The second problem is caused by lacking of ideas. Nowadays, many students feel hard to gain and express their ideas into a writing. They even have difficulties in starting their writing because they do not know how to start. As said by Tho (2000) as cited in Tuan (2010, p. 81), “non-native writers may not have enough ideas to write down or, even worse, they have nothing to say.” It means that English Foreign Language (EFL) learners have problems in discovering ideas. In addition, Negari (2011) said that writing in academic context is difficult to learn for students since they do not know how to generate ideas when they are writing. In this case, generating ideas is the basic stage in writing. If the students have a problem in generating ideas, then they will get difficulties to make a writing.

Furthermore, lack of grammar knowledge is also one of the students' problems in writing. Seyabi and Tuzlukova (2014) have found that most of the students in Omani school, Southwestern Asia, which is mostly English Foreign

Language (EFL) learners have problem with lexical and contents aspect of writing. In writing, people should be in touch with grammatical aspect. It is because to make a good writing, people should consider some lexical things such as organization, subject-verb agreement, punctuation, and spelling. Considering those problems that occur to the students in these days, writing can be said as the challenging skill in language.

Consequently, it is necessary to have teaching strategies that are appropriate and comfortable for students in order to solve the students' problems in writing. There are four strategies in teaching writing that can be used, such as using picture, using reading, using translation, and using all language skills. Strategy in using picture here means the teacher use picture as a media in teaching-learning process. While strategy in using reading here according to Raimes (1983) is a strategy when the students create their own writing based on text that they read. For example, students are asked to summarize a text or make a speculation based on the text. In addition, a strategy in using translation is a strategy when the students are asked to translate a text into a target language. Then, Raimes (1983) stated that strategy in using all language skill is a strategy that is involving all language skills. This strategy can be applied in group of three. The first student is asked to speak about one topic. Then, the second student must write what he has heard and comprehended. The third student will read the second student's writing. From those strategies, the appropriate strategies to be implemented in this study was the strategy in using picture. It was because picture is an interesting media that provide a real-life situation and the participants of this

study were mostly hyperactive students. By using picture in the teaching-learning process, it can make the students pay attention to the classroom activity and more interested in learning narrative text. Thus, based on those reasons, this research focused on the strategy in using picture.

A picture has been often used in teaching-learning process. I used picture as a media because picture has been familiar among students and it provides a real-life situation. Thus, by seeing a picture, students can feel the atmosphere of the picture. Furthermore, there are many kinds of pictures, such as picture sequence, picture story and picture series. Brown (2004) proposed those kind of pictures that are integrated with some clues of questions namely picture-cued tasks. Picture-cued tasks are good for stimulating students' written responses (Brown, 2004). It means picture-cued tasks can stimulate students to write anything. Students will have some ideas when they are seeing a picture. Thus, it can stimulate students' willingness in writing. Considering the explanation above, I am interested in knowing the implementation of picture-cued tasks in writing class.

Statement of the Problems

In language learning, the first thing that students must learn is about four basic skills in English language; speaking, listening, reading, and writing. From those skills, writing is the hardest skill to be learned. Based on my observation during the internship program that was held at SMA Muhammadiyah 4 Yogyakarta, there were several problems that were faced by the students in their writing such as; lack of practice, problems in using correct grammar and

vocabulary, and problem in teaching-learning process. The first problem was lacking of practice. There were many students who could not write anything. Most of them had difficulties in expressing their ideas into a writing. There were also students who had no idea at all. That problem was caused by lacking of practice. Besides, the lack of practice session that was given by the teachers also became the students' problem in writing. Therefore, both of the students and the teacher should provide more time to practice the students' writing skill.

The second problem came from the using of correct grammar and vocabulary. There were many students who had difficulties in determining the word choices and grammar used. Aydogan and Akbarov (2014) also emphasized their statement on the difficulties of writing skills as a follow:

Writing is the productive skill in the written mode. It, too, is more complicated than it seems at first, and often seems to be the hardest of the skills, even for native speakers of a language, since it involves not just a graphic representation of speech, but the development and presentation of thoughts in a structured way. (p. 674)

It means that writing is the hardest skills in language. It is because people must pay attention to the unity and coherence elements when they are writing. It is different from speaking skill which just pays attention to the message that will be delivered.

The third problem deals with teaching-learning process. I saw that some teachers in the research's place rarely encourage the students to write. They only asked the students to pay attention to the teacher's explanation and did some

assignments. I saw that some teachers only focused on the cognitive aspect without giving the students opportunities to practice their skills. That statement is in line with Ariningsih (2010) who stated that the teacher has not given chances to the students to train and improve their writing and has not given right treatment to solve the students' writing problem. Thus, based on those problems, writing is very important to be learned because it is considering that writing is the hardest skill in English language.

Therefore, based on those problems, the strategy that is appropriate to use in overcoming the students' problem in writing is using picture-cued task. Besides picture provides a real-life situation, pictures can also provide many tasks. Therefore, it will be easier to use in the teaching-learning process. Thus, I want to know the implementation of picture-cued tasks as a strategy in teaching writing.

Scope of the Problems

The scope of the research is limited to discuss about the implementation of picture-cued tasks in writing narrative texts. I chose narrative text because it was appropriate with picture-cued tasks which was about telling a story. Then, it was also based on the syllabus. In addition, students have studied narrative text since junior high school. Thus, it will be easier for the students because they have familiar with narrative text. In addition, the respondent of this research was also limited to 11th grade. The meeting for doing the research was limited to four times meeting. It was because the time's restriction to do the research.

Research Questions

Based on the background above, the research questions addressed in this study are:

1. How do picture-cued tasks help solve the students' writing problem?
2. What are students' responses on the use of picture-cued tasks in writing class?

Purpose of the Study

There are some purposes of this research that related with the research questions above. Here are the goals of this research:

1. to see the implementation of picture-cued tasks whether it helps solve the students' problem in writing.
2. to find out the students' responses toward the implementation of picture-cued tasks in writing class.

Significance of the Study

There are several benefits of this study that can be used by the teachers, the students, the researcher, and future researcher. The significance of this study is described as a follow:

The teachers. This research can be the reference for the teacher to find the interesting teaching strategies for teaching writing. This research can also be the reference to use different strategies in teaching writing by using picture-cued tasks.

The students. For students in the research's place, this research will motivate the students to write and encourage the students to improve their writing

ability. Besides, for English Education Department students, this research can be a reference for teaching writing in the internship program.

The researcher. I can get new experience in teaching writing using picture-cued tasks and explore more interesting teaching strategies for teaching writing.

Future researchers. This research can be a reference for the future researcher to do the same research in different place. This research can also be a reference for the research of the future researcher.

Outline of the Research

This research encompasses five chapters. In the beginning of the research, I discussed about the background of the study which told about the reason why this research should be conducted and the basis of the problem in this study. I also gave the scope of the study to limit the study that was researched. In the next chapter, I gave an overview of writing skill, process of writing, problems in writing, types of texts, and narrative text. Besides, I also discussed about the picture-cued tasks, the varieties of picture-cued tasks, and picture-cued tasks in teaching-learning activities. In the third chapter, I focused on the methodology that was used to collect the data of the research. The next chapter discussed about the finding of the research that will answer the research question. The last chapter concluded the whole research including reiterating the findings of the research. The suggestion for the teachers, the students, and the further researcher were also discussed in this chapter.