

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Background of the Study

Language is an important factor in the daily life. It plays an important role in the society - that is as a means of communication. As a result of the development of technology which permits people from different nations and cultures to meet and interact with each other, communication across languages become more essential. Language enables people to transform their ideas, thoughts, feelings, and perceptions so that they can learn about others, understand what others mean and create new information to others (Lehmann, 1983: 1). Through languages, people can produce utterances to agree, reject others' opinion, command, or persuade each other.

Based on Kurikulum 2004 SMA (2003: 3-4), language has four functions. First, language has the heuristic function. In the classroom, for example, language enables a teacher to explain the material and also the students to understand and grasp the material given. Second, language has the manipulation function. It means that through language someone can influence and change the situation around him or her. Third, language has the imaginative function. Someone uses this function whenever he or she writes novels, short stories, or poems. Fourth, language is also used to share one's ideas to others. Therefore, it has the idealistic function.

Language has four major skills, i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and it also has components, like vocabulary, spelling, grammar, pronunciation, and so on. These skills and components have their own portions in the communication and people combine them together whenever they communicate with each other – including in the written forms.

As one of the language skills, writing has an important role in communication. Writing helps and allows people from different places and backgrounds to communicate. This is essential since people do not only use oral language to communicate with others but also written language. A letter, for example as an easiest written medium for communication, can be an instrument to test one's ability in using the language effectively for communication (Barrass 1982: 25). Besides it is important in the communication, writing is also a way to express the languages that people learned (Thornton, 1980: 9). By learning how to write, people can improve their mastery in the languages they learn since they deal with the grammar and vocabulary of the languages. Through writing, people can deepen their understanding of the languages they learn.

Based on its types, writing can be divided into narrative writing, descriptive writing, expository writing, persuasive writing, and argumentative writing (Brereton, 1982:58). From those types, it is assumed that narrative writing is more popularly and commonly used whenever someone is asked to write. Narration is also considered as the simplest and the easiest step in writing since it demands someone to tell a story using the chronological order.

Even though narrative writing is considered as the simplest and the easiest step in writing, it does not mean that someone can merely put everything in his or her mind and compose them into paragraphs. The way to deliver it should be clear and concise to avoid readers for being lost in the middle of understanding the writing piece and to help readers to broaden their knowledge with the information given. Hardaway (1978: 19) defines narrative writing as “chronological pattern that depends on a sequence of actions. It is used to tell stories and it deals with events that take place in time”. He, then, adds that narrative writing is the act of constructing ideas in the form of stories, for example personal experience, diaries, journals, and so on.

Another important thing is that writing, as a thinking process, takes more time to be learned and consists of several stages to be followed. Winkler (1988: 13) states that writing is a “difficult, back-and-forth process.” It means that someone cannot produce a good composition merely in a single action. First, someone has to find an idea to be written. Second, he or she has to formulate the idea in the form of draft and develop the idea in his or her writing. After that, he or she tries to reread, edit, and revise the work. When he or she does not feel satisfied with his work, he or she will start it all over again.

English as a Foreign Language students often consider writing as a difficult subject. “Whenever they are asked to write, they usually complain that they do not know what to write about” (Rybowski, 1986: 38). He also states that it is easier to ask them to speak than to write. The lack of ideas or the problems in finding ones usually becomes their problem in doing the composition. Another

problem is that students cannot write coherently. Even though they can write the sentences into paragraphs, they sometimes cannot relate their paragraphs to one another. They usually just write everything that is in their mind without paying attention whether these sentences are coherent or not. This makes problems for the readers in understanding their writing.

Another problem, it is known that English grammar has various different tenses to state different situations or events. Foreign language students also have problems in using the English grammar in their writings since it is different from their own native language grammar. They seem to make inconsistency in the grammar point that produces meaningless composition. They also face difficulties in finding the appropriate words that can be used in their writing. It happens because in English there are several words that can be used to state an idea. A good writer must select these words based on the context and the purpose that are going to be stressed. Another problem that the students usually have is the error use of punctuation and spelling. Even though punctuation and spelling are considered as the least point in writing, it still has a big influence in helping the reader to understand the writing piece. Without having the correct form of punctuation and spelling, someone will get difficulties in grasping what the writer wants.

One thing that should be remembered is that “when someone writes, he or she also makes use of his or her knowledge of the world and of his or her experience as a reader” (Lopes, 1991: 42). This is also called as schemata or the background knowledge that someone has. Based on this point of view, reading is

also needed as a way to provide input for someone to write. By using their experience as the readers, people can get information that can be used to activate their background knowledge in order to construct similar or new compositions.

In line with this, Reid (1993: 64) says that good writers often read and good readers often outline, summarize, respond to and synthesize their reading. By summarizing the reading passages, someone reads the written works to get information, relates the information given with the knowledge that he or she has and develops it into a new composition. He or she can also learn how to write coherently because the writer's composition is usually in good and correct sentences. It can be a guide for him or her in making the compositions.

From the explanation above, therefore, the writer conducted a study that still tried to relate those language skills – reading and writing. She used reading passages to be summarized to give ideas to the students in writing their narrative compositions. Through summarizing technique, the students were expected to write their compositions better. This technique is the combination between reading and writing proficiencies since they are interdependent activities to each other (Ford, 1992:288).

In this study, the writer used reading passages consisting of short paragraphs. They were in the form of short stories in order to help the students understand the information given easily. She used the reading passages because the students of senior high school mostly dealt with them as a media given during the teaching and learning process in the classroom. They had important information that could give ideas for the students to write and broaden their

knowledge. The reading passages also consisted of ready-made correct sentences that could be good examples for the students in working on their compositions. From these media, the students were expected to produce good and coherent compositions without any hesitations in making them.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study has been done to answer the research question below:

- Is there a difference between the achievement of the students when they learn narrative writing using summarizing technique and using question – answer technique?

1.3 Objective of the Study

This study has been conducted to find the answer of the problem statement above. It is:

- To find out the difference between the achievement of the students when they learn narrative writing using summarizing technique and using question – answer technique.

1.4 Assumptions

This study has been done under the following assumptions:

1. The population of this study are the second grade non-science students of the Santa Maria Surabaya Catholic Senior High School of the academic year of 2004/2005. The students are assumed to have the background

knowledge about narrative writing because narrative writing is the basic type of writing in senior high school and the second grade students have already got it since they were in the first grade.

2. The reading passages given consist of interesting information. The reading passages are assumed to motivate and give ideas to the students to write their narrative compositions.
3. The teacher who administers the treatment and the post-test is assumed to be objective and to do the best by following the lesson plan given.
4. The two raters who score the students' works are assumed to do their best by following the guidelines given.

1.5 Hypotheses

There are two hypotheses in this study. They are alternative hypotheses (HA) and null hypotheses (HO).

HA (Alternative Hypotheses):

- There is a significant difference between the achievement of the students when they learn narrative writing using summarizing technique and using question – answer technique.

HO (Null Hypotheses):

- There is no significant difference between the achievement of the students when they learn narrative writing using summarizing technique and using question – answer technique.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to assist the students to improve their skill in composing and developing their compositions, especially the narrative type of writing. Moreover, this technique can also contribute a variation for the teaching writing activity in the classroom since the students are not familiar with this technique.

1.7 The Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study is focused on using summarizing reading passages. It is done to give the ideas to the students in writing their narrative compositions. The writer would like to limit this study into several points. They are:

1. This study is dealing with narrative writing. The writer has chosen narrative writing because it is assumed that narrative writing is popular and students are familiar with that type of writing. It is also the basic type of writing in senior high school.
2. The population of this study is the second grade non-science students of Santa Maria Surabaya Catholic Senior High School of the academic year of 2004/2005. From the five non-science classes available in this school, the writer takes two classes as the samples of this study.
3. This study is conducted using summarizing reading passages to give ideas for the students in writing narration.
4. The reading passages used in this study are in the form of narrative stories taken from the published books and the Internet.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

Writing has its own influence towards communication. It permits someone to share his or her knowledge, ideas, and feelings (Samelson, 1982: 2). As one of the language skills, writing has to be learned rather than taught (Lewitt, 1990: 2). It is not merely writing down what it is in someone's mind onto paper but it needs a process that should be followed. Before starting to write, a person has to find an idea. When he or she already gets the idea, he or she tries to collect more information in order to help him or her in developing the composition.

One thing that should be remembered is that "when someone writes, he or she also makes use of his or her knowledge of the world and of his or her experience as a reader" (Lopes, 1991: 42). This is also called schemata, which is defined by Rumelhart (1980: 34) as "a theory about how knowledge is represented and about how that representation facilitates, the use of the knowledge in particular ways." Schemata help someone to write and to be survived in communicating his or her ideas in the written forms. A way to trigger the schemata is by reading a lot. By using the summarizing technique, someone is able to get the ideas to write and organize them in paragraphs that one of them is in the form of narration.

Narrative writing is considered as the most common type of writing, especially in the senior high school. It is more popularly used whenever the students are asked to write. Hardaway (1978: 19) defines narrative writing as "chronological pattern that depends on a sequence of actions. It is used to tell stories and deals with events that takes place in time". Therefore, it is also called as chronological writing since it uses chronological pattern.

1.9 Definition of the Key Terms

To avoid any misinterpretations, the important terms in this thesis are defined as follows:

1. Writing

Writing is “a means of written communication to allow us to share our knowledge, ideas, and feelings” (Samelson, 1982: 2).

2. Narrative writing

Narrative writing is “the chronological pattern that depends on a sequence of actions to tell stories. It deals with events that take place in time” (Hardaway and Hardaway, 1978: 19).

3. Summarizing

Summarizing is “a way to condense information from a source, perhaps capsulizing a chapter in a short paragraph or a paragraph in a single sentence” (Hacker, 1989: 170).

4. Reading passage

Reading passage is “the reading material design that consists of brief portion of a written work or speech that is quoted or referred to by itself as relevant to a point under discussion” (Webster’s Third New International Dictionary, 1986).

5. Achievement

Achievement is “the extent to which an individual has mastered the specific skills or body of information acquired in formal learning situation” (Harris,

1989: 3). In this study, the writing achievement is represented by the scores of the students' post-test.

1.10 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction that is including background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, assumption, hypotheses, significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the study, theoretical framework, definition of the key terms, and organization of the thesis. The second chapter is concerned with the theories that become the basic foundation of this study. The third chapter discusses the research method. The fourth chapter is about the data analysis and interpretation of the findings. The last chapter presents the conclusion and the suggestions of this study.