

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of The Research

In modern Era as right now, writing plays an important role in real life. There are several products of writing that human being as social creature need as media to share idea. Personal letter is one of the examples of writing product that can be used as media to interact, sharing experiences and to communicate each other in written form personally. According to Meyers, writing is an action. There are some steps in writing process, they are process of discovering and organizing the idea, writing or putting them on paper, reshaping and revise the writing.¹

As a part of English skill, the learners of English language should master it. It is important for person especially adult level in making communication or giving approach to other person. According to Richards in book of the Language Teaching Matrix stated that writing form for adult level needs not only institutional writing but also personal one.² The importance of writing can be seen from the fact that scientific books, novels, reports, letter, newspaper, magazines, brochures, commercial advertisements are products of writing. Most of those products are very important for human being in their daily activities.

Based on those fact, English learners especially learners at Senior High School level must master it besides speaking. As a basic skill in English language, writing skill could not be separated from education sector. The main

¹ Alan Meyers, *Gateways Academic Writing, Effective Sentence, Paragraph, and Essays* (Longman:2005) p. 2.

² Jack C Richard, *The Language Teaching Matrix*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p.100.

reason, English learners at school must be able to express their ideas of feeling in spoken or written forms effectively.

The effectiveness of sharing or giving information could be seen when person tries to communicate with others person in written forms. The writer thinks that the information could be effective if the reader understand what writer says in written form. It is different from spoken form; the speaker speaks to the listener directly. Here, speaker does not have much time to think more.

“Writing is one of the four language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Writing and speaking are productive skill. That means they involve producing language rather than receiving it.”³ Moreover writing skill is more complicated than others skills in English language. Writing skill is not only talks about grammars and vocabularies but also of conceptual and judgment elements.⁴ Because of the difficulties, some efforts have been done to solve the problems, the purpose is to make writing became easier and interest to learn for students.

In the holy Qur’an, Allah has stated in sura al-‘Alaq verse 4-5:


























“Who taught (the writing) by the pen. He has taught man which he knew not”.⁵

The word “*Qalam*” in verse 4 of sura al-‘Alaq has meaning of the tool to write (pen). It means that pen is used to write, and the result of using pen is written text.⁶

³ Mary Spratt, *et. al.*, *The TKT Teaching Knowledge Test Course*, (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 26.

⁴ J. B. Heaton, *Writing English Language*, (London: Longman, 1975), p: 138.

⁵ Muhammad Muhsin Khan, and Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali, *Interpretation of The Meanings of The Noble Qur’an In The English language*, (Riyadh-Saudi Arabia: Dar-us-Salam Publication, 1999) p. 808.

Based on those verses, Allah SWT explained that He taught human being by pen (*qalam*). Discovery of pen and writing are the greatest gifts from God. By writing, one generation can transfer their knowledge to the next generations. It shows that the tool of writing and writing itself have important roles.⁷

The problems faced by learners in English language must be solved by English teacher. By using appropriate and interesting media in the process of teaching and learning English at class, it is expected learners will easy in receiving writing materials from teachers. The writer in this research is interested to use personal letter as media in teaching writing at class especially to write a composition in writing the recount text. Recount is kinds of types text that retell the past event which the purpose is informing or entertaining the reader. By using personal letter in writing recount text, students will enjoy telling story in written form. It makes them easy in understanding and implementing recount text in writing.

One way to helps the teacher in teaching writing recount text is by using media, and personal letter is one of media that hopefully can help teacher in teaching writing process. Personal letter is a media to express students' ideas in written form, because letter can make student to be more motivated and easier to express their feeling. By using personal letter in writing recount text, students will be able to tell everything, experience, event they had to share each others.

Because media plays important role in understanding English learners in receiving materials, teacher as guide of class should use it in delivering recount text. Basyirudin stated that media for teaching language can be classified into;

⁶ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim atas Surat-surat Pendek Berdasarkan Turunnya Wahyu*, (Bandung; Pustaka Hidayah, 1997), p. 98.

⁷ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim atas Surat-surat Pendek Berdasarkan Turunnya Wahyu*, p. 99.

visual media, audio media, audio-visual media and games.⁸ Personal letter is one of the visual media. By using appropriate method this media could help learners in master it. Personal letter is a type of friendly letter which provides communication between a small numbers of people, usually two. It contains of feeling expression, private things, and important things as a way to communicate and allows a person to leave a message and to keep in touch.

Through letter students can communicate to each other and convey their meaning. Students use a letter as media to express their ideas in written form, because it hopefully can make them to be more motivated and easier to express their feeling. They can tell to their friends, their father, their mother, their sister, their brother, and so on about their feeling, experienced, and wish.

Personal letters become the communication tool to convey information or idea in written by one person to another. Furthermore, communication can be delivered by using at least two ways, they are speech and written. Here personal letter becomes one of communication tool in written form. Both speech and written language have different context and implication.

Speech has more highly contextualized, which depends on the ability to produce spoken language spontaneously, less planning, direct self-monitoring in the real-time, and has not specific convention. Written text is constructed with specific convention, emphasizes on explicit coding of logical relation with the systematic rhetorical and it characteristic is more formal.⁹ But, both speech and written get an equal interest in teaching English as foreign language.

Although English is not the language with the largest number of native or 'first' language speaker, it has become a lingua franca. A lingua franca can be defined as a language widely adopted from communication between two

⁸ M. Basyiruddin Usman and Asnawir, *Media Pengajaran*, (Jakarta: Ciputat Press, 2002), p. 29.

⁹ Ken Hyland, *Teaching and Researching Writing*, (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2002), p. 49-50.

speakers whose native languages are different from each other's and where one or both speakers are using it as a second language.¹⁰

English is one of the languages, that language primarily a means of communicating thoughts from the speaker or writer to the listener or reader. The major concern of the writer or speaker is to use language as the media to communicate to other people that there are some meaning or mind of the speaker or writer that want to convey to the listener or reader.¹¹ The reason why English is important to be mastered is the pursuit of global communication which declares English as International language. English use in oral and written to make an international contact and cooperation among people in different countries.

Nowadays, English is taught by teachers as a subject not only in Junior High School, Senior High School, and University, but also in Elementary School, even Kindergarten. This phenomenon shows the awareness of people that English is very important. English as an international language has a very important role as the language of science, technology and international communication. It is crucial to be mastered lately since any other languages in the world. So it is important that English to be learnt by students.

Realized that teaching English especially in writing skill is very important to be learnt by students, teacher has to formulate the method and choose to use the good media to help them in teaching writing. The writer considers that personal letter hopefully can help teacher in teaching writing process. Hamalik as quoted by Arsyad states that using a variety of media in the learning process will motivate and increase the probability that the students will learn more and retain

¹⁰ Jeremy Harmer, *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2001), p. 1.

¹¹ Claude W. Faulker, *Writing Good Sentences, A functional Approach to Sentence Structure, Grammar and Punctuation*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Son, 1950) Revised Ed. p. 1.

better what they learn in improving the performance of skill they are expected to develop. Psychologically it gives positive effect for students in improving their skill.¹²

Besides using a variety of media, teacher also thinks the teaching methods. According to Mackey, cited by Setyadi, there are some factors that affect the choice of method in the teaching learning process. Those factors are age, aptitude, second language level, interest, and the time he can devote to language learning. The other factors that affect the choice of method are the size of group and the culture of group.¹³ For the successfulness of teaching writing skill to senior high school students, the teacher must develop curriculum; select the appropriate teaching materials, teaching methods, and learning assessments. Furthermore, one way to help the teacher in teaching writing recount text is by using media.

Due to the reason above, the writer tries to identify the improving students' skill in writing recount text by using personal letter with the tenth grader of MASS Proto Pekalongan in academic year of 2011/2012.

B. Reasons for Choosing the Topic

The reasons of the writer for choosing the topic can be formulated as follow:

1. Writing is one of the basic skills that have to be learnt by students in the tenth year of senior high school.
2. Recount text is one of the genres that must be taught to students of senior high school.
3. Personal letter is one of the interesting media for student which can help student's skill in writing recount text.

¹²Azhar Arsyad, *Media pembelajaran*, (Jakarta: PT RajaGrafindo Persada, 2008), p. 15

¹³Bambang Setyadi, *Teaching English as Foreign Language*, (Yogyakarta: Graha Ilmu, 2006), p. 177.

C. Research Questions

The research questions of this study are as follows, they are:

1. How is the implementation of personal letter to improve students skill in writing recount text?
2. How can personal letter improve students skill in writing recount text?

D. Objectives of the Research

In this study, the objectives of this study are:

1. To describe the implementation of personal letter to improve students skill in writing recount text.
2. To identify the improvement of students skill in writing recount text.

E. Significances of the Study

The result of the study hopefully will give contribution to English teaching and learning, they are:

1. Theoretically

The study will enrich the technique of teaching and learning English.

2. Practically

a. For the teacher

It will give contribution to English teacher that teaching recount text through the use of personal letter is more interesting. The technique may improve the student's skill in writing recount text.

b. For the students

It helps the students to write recount text by writing personal letter, because personal letter is interesting and has more topics to share.

c. For the writer

It will get new knowledge and experience in teaching recount text using personal letter, beside fulfill of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Education.