

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Language as a means of communication plays an important role in our daily life. People use language to gain information, share our emotion, feeling, and ideas to others. Besides that, we also use language as a means to look through the outside world. Students are now increasingly required to make contact each other in getting information to understand the culture, science and technology.

The possession of language, more than any other attribute, distinguishes human being from animal. To understand our humanity one must understand the language that makes us as human. According to the philosophy that is expressed by the religions and many people's; language is the source of human life and power.¹ The presence of language is one of the signs of Allah as a creator. As Allah stated in verse ar-Rum 22:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَانِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ
لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the variations in your languages and your colors: verily in that are Signs for those who know.²

The teaching and learning English process includes four skills namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Those skills should be taught and mastered by students. The teaching and learning of those skills is not as easy as it is to say. It is because English has many differences from our native language. Relating to this matter, writing, as one of the language skills stated in the curriculum, is considered as the most difficult and complex skill to learn by students. Students find difficulties in writing in the second language rather

¹Victoria Fromklin, *An Introduction to Language*, (New York: Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data, 1983), p. 3.

²Muhammad Zafrulla Khan, *The Qur'an*, (London: Curzan Press Ltd., 1981), 3rd Ed., p. 397.

than in their first language. It is caused by some factors such as vocabulary, language functions, grammar, and style and sociolinguistic. Those factors cannot be ignored in learning writing skill in English.

The writing skill is the most important skill since it represents our thinking and feeling in a real form and influences other people's understanding toward our ideas. The development of writing is one of the great human inventions. It is difficult for many people to imagine how language nowadays without the presence of writing. When people speak without having any written form, oral literature will abound, much crucial knowledge will be memorized by limited people and environment, it cannot be delivered widely to others who are different in place and generations, finally, all of them will pass away. These are very serious problems, because human memory is short-lived. The presence of writing has overcome such problems and allowed communication across miles and through the years and centuries. Writing permits a society to permanently record its poetry, its history and its technology in order to be known and learned by others. As Allah states in verse al- A'raf 146:

وَكَتَبْنَا لَهُ فِي الْأَلْوَابِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَوْعِظَةً وَتَفْصِيلًا لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ...³

And We had written (laws) for him (Musa) in the tablets in all matters, both commanding and explaining all things....³

Moreover, in reality, Indonesian schools allocate little portion in teaching and learning process for writing skills. It is because English curriculum in Indonesia allocates 5 periods in a week x 40 minutes for English teaching at senior high school. Meanwhile, not all the amount of the time is used to teach the writing skill but also reading, speaking and listening skills.

As we know course book has a great role in teaching and learning process, it is like a guide for teacher in teaching and it can be a reference for student in studying. English course book considered to be the course of study,

³*Ibid.*, p. 155.

the guide on methods of instruction and the source of language. The choice of an English language course book in language schools worldwide is often taken too lightly, which can lead to serious repercussions for both teachers and students. The selection of an inappropriate course book is likely to act as a straight jacket, forcing teachers to grapple with material that is too difficult or irrelevant and fails to engage learners.⁴

In order to make English teaching successful, especially the teaching of writing, some factors have to be taken into account such as the quality of teachers, the students' interest, and the course book used. To enable students to master the English skills, especially writing skill, exercises in the course book could lead students to the goal as stated in the curriculum. The teacher should examine whether the writing exercises of a course book are relevant or not with some aspects consider in writing exercise.

In this final project, I focus on the writing exercise presented in *Look Ahead 2* (English Course Book for Senior High School Students Year XI). It is an English textbook for the eleventh grade students of senior high school. So, in this final project, the writer will try to find out whether the writing exercises in that textbook has fulfilled the principles of teaching learning English writing and the some aspects of writing exercise.

B. Reason for Choosing the Topic

There are some reasons which are considered to show the important of conduction this study as follow:

1. English has been taught for a long time (at least for about 6 years), but it does not mean that the result of teaching English in Indonesian schools is satisfactory. It can be seen from the low achievement of students' pure score of national final examination from year to year. Moreover, there are some students who fail in English final examination. Many factors

⁴ Razia Fakir Mohammad, *Effective Use in Textbook*, from <http://www.equip123.net/jeid/articles/5/EffectiveUseTextbook.pdf> retrieved 25 September 2009

influence the success of teaching learning foreign language, one of the factors that affect it is the teaching materials including course book.

2. Writing is very important for human life. The needs of writing English are very urgent at present time. The most of companies are required their applicants to be talent in English both written and spoken.
3. Exercise is very important since it is made as a tool for measuring and evaluating student's ability in achieving the material which is given.
4. Learning writing is very complex. Here, the writer wants to find out whether the course book consists of enough and appropriate exercise or not.
5. *Look Ahead 2* that will be analyzed is the most course book used for teaching and learning English to eleventh year's students in Semarang. Therefore, it is important to find out whether the content of writing exercises in *Look Ahead 2* is appropriate with the students' need or not.

C. Research Question

Based on the background of the research, the researcher states the following research problem: "How do writing exercises in *Look Ahead 2* meet the kinds of tests, *KTSP* curriculum, basic competence in writing skills, kinds of classroom writing, types of writing exercise, teachable, and presence of example, aims, and kinds of practice exercise?"

D. Limitation of the Study

I limit the scope and the set of problem of the study, so that it will not be so wide and the study will be more effective, the researcher limits the problem as follow:

1. Since there are many books used in senior high schools, so the study is limited on one book, which is *Look Ahead 2* (English Course Book for Senior High School Students Year XI) published by Erlangga.
2. The study only focuses on the writing exercises in the course book in terms of its relevance with the criteria of writing exercise. The criteria are:

kinds of tests, *KTSP* curriculum, basic competence in writing skills, kinds of classroom writing, types of writing exercise, teach-ability, presence of example, aims, kinds of practice exercise“.

E. Objective of the Study

According to the research problem above, this final project is intended to meet the following objective: ”To Evaluate writing exercises in *Look Ahead 2* in term of the kinds of tests, *KTSP* curriculum, basic competence in writing skills, kinds of classroom writing, types of writing exercise, teachable, presence of example, aims, kinds of practice exercise“

F. Significance of the Study

This result of this study is expected to lead the following advantages:

1. For English teachers, hopefully this research can give a reference to select suitable English course book in term of writing exercise in the teaching process.
2. For students, hopefully this research can help them in choosing a writing exercise from English course book to improve their writing skill.
3. For English course book authors, it is hoped that in arranging a course book, they will present materials and exercises which is appropriate with the ideal of course book materials especially in writing.

G. Definition of Key Terms

In order to make clear in this final project, the researcher would like to explain the meaning of the terms used as follow:

1. Analysis

Analysis is the study by examining its part.⁵ Moreover according to <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/analysis>, analysis comes from Greek language that means “a breaking up” is the process of breaking a complex topic or substance into smaller parts to gain better understanding of it.

2. Writing Exercise

Writing means produce something in written form so that people can read, perform or use it.⁶ It means that writing is one way to communicate with other people besides speaking, reading, and listening. The word “writing” seems to be very easy to understand. However, it cannot be ignored when students write a paragraph, they should not write not only semantically correct, but also in correct grammar.

While exercise is activity intended for training⁷. Another opinion says that exercise is an activity to occupy the attention and effort of; to task and to exert for the sake of training improvement, to practice in order to develop and also to improve by practice.

From the definition above, writing exercise is a task or activity to improve writing skill.

3. Look Ahead 2, an English course book for student year XI

Look Ahead 2 is a series of English course book for senior high school students year XI, it is arranged by Th. M. Sudarwati and Eudia Grace published by Erlangga.

So, analysis on writing exercise in *Look Ahead 2* (English course book for senior high school students year XI) published by erlangga is the process of breaking the substance of the writing exercise in the course book.

p. 14 ⁵ A S, Hornby, *Advance Learners Dictionary*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995),

⁶ *Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 502

⁷ *Ibid*, p. 144