

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

English is one of the important subjects for Senior High School and the students of senior high school are expected to be able to utilize some skills in English. There are four important skills that are expected to be mastered by the students; they are writing, speaking, reading, and listening. These skills are very important to be mastered because it can help the students to be able to communicate in English, as the target language.

According to Savignon in Murcia, the skills needed to engage in writing activities are described subsequently as productive.¹ So, writing is one of the productive language skills. Here, the writer will produce many aspects of writing when they are in the process of writing. So, practicing writing needs some processes in order to make a good piece of paragraph or essay. As pointed out by Oshima and Hogue that writing is a process, not a product.² It means that students have to complete some processes such as reviewing and revising their composition to make a better piece of writing to hand in. It is possible that students will review and revise their writing more than once. Oshima and Hogue also state that writing is not easy because it takes study

¹ Marianne Celce Murcia, *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language [Third Edition]*, (Boston: Heinle&Heinle, 2001) p. 14

² Alice Oshima and Ann Hogue, *Writing Academic English [Third Edition]*, (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1999) p. 3

and practice to develop this skill.³ Besides completing some processes, the students have to be able to use their ability in both grammar and vocabulary to produce a good piece of writing.

Based on School-Based Curriculum (SBC) / KTSP, writing skill for Senior High School has two basic competences that should be achieved by the students at the first year in the second semester. First, the students are able to express the meaning of short functional written text (for example: announcement, advertisement, invitation card, etc) accurately, fluently and contextually to interact in daily life context. Second, the students are able to express the meaning and rhetorical step of simple essay accurately, fluently, and contextually to interact in daily life context in term of narrative text, descriptive text and news item. Meanwhile, the students are strived to be able to arrange the descriptive essay.⁴

SMUN 5Pekanbaru is one of the schools applying School-Based Curriculum as the guidance in teaching and learning process. The demand of the minimum criteria of passing grade that is determined by English teacher is also relatively high with the score 75. Based on the writer's preliminary observation by interviewing the teachers of English language, writing has been taught by using conventional approach. It means that this approach make the students only produce the language based on what the teacher had given to them. The students like more filling in the blanks of the sentences or paragraphs. They are not accustomed to generating their ideas in writing

³ Ibid

⁴BadanStandarNasionalPendidikan, *StandarKompetensidanKompetensiDasar SMA/MA*(Jakarta: 2006), pg 130

paragraphs or essay. According to Murcia, this approach will not aid their acquisition or spontaneous use of the target language.⁵

Based on the writer's preliminary observation at the second year of Senior High School of SMUN 5Pekanbaru, the writer found a lot of problems as follows:

- a. Some of the students are not able to write the generic structures of descriptive paragraphs.
- b. Some of the students are not able to demonstrate the main idea of descriptive paragraphs.
- c. Some of the students are not able to create a complete sentence in descriptive paragraph.
- d. Some of the students are not able to choose vocabulary appropriately in writing descriptive paragraphs.
- e. Some of the students need long time to write.
- f. Some of the students do not know what to write.

However, some of the students can not fulfill the demand of the minimum criteria of passing grade (KKM) given by the English teacher. Therefore, the writer would like to try to apply a strategy in learning English called Praise-Question-Polish (PQP) Strategy. Praise-Question-Polish Strategy is developed by Bill Lyons in 1981. Praise-Question-Polish is a peer response strategy that fosters quality comments and constructive

⁵Marianne CelceMurcia.Loc.Cit p. 9

feedback.⁶This strategy is also a good way for peers to edit each other's work, because after students have written a first draft, they meet with a partner and share what they like, what they do not understand, and also additional ideas of other's work.⁷

Referring to the problems described above, it is clear that most of the students in SMU 5Pekanbaru still have some problems that have to solve as soon as possible. The problems can be from the students or the other factors. Therefore the writer attempts to solve this problem by conducting a research entitled:**The Effect of Using Praise-Question-Polish (PQP) Strategy to Students' Writing Ability on Descriptive Paragraphs at the First Year of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru.**

B. Definition of the Term

To simplify the process of designing and application of the research and to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation, it is necessary to define the terms that are used in this research.

1. Praise-Question-Polish Strategy

Lyons states that Praise-Question-Polish Strategy is a good way for peers to edit each other's work.⁸ Praise-Question-Polish Strategy is a peer response strategy that fosters quality comments and constructive

⁶Praise-Question-Polish,
<http://www.learner.org/workshops/middlewriting/images/pdf/W7ReadPeer.pdf> , retrieved on 7th March 2013

⁷ Teacher Created Resources, *Nonfiction Strategies*,
www.mtsd.k12.wi.us.mtsd.District/ela.../praise_question_polish.html , retrieved on 7th March 2013

⁸Ibid. p. 118

feedback.⁹ It means this strategy is useful and giving opportunity to students to edit each other's work in writing. In this case, the students in peer give the critical comments about each other's work in constructive way. In conclusion, the feedbacks given by the peers are utilized to help students develop the quality of their writing.

2. Writing Descriptive

According to Webster, writing can be defined as the act of one who writes the characters so made; handwriting, anything written or expressed in letters, the profession or occupation of a writer, and the practice, art, form, or style of literary composition. In conclusion, writing can be defined as the act of someone who writes through the complex processes and this act will produce the result in the written form.

According to Syafi'i et al, descriptive means giving a picture in words; describing something, especially without expressing feelings or judging. Descriptive paragraph is developed when you describe the way something (place, person, thing) looks i.e. its physical description, you have to describe it according to space.

⁹Praise-Question-Polish,
<http://www.learner.org/workshops/middlewriting/images/pdf/W7ReadPeer.pdf> , retrieved on 7th March 2013

C. Problem

Based on the background illustrated above, it is very clear that the students still have a lot of problems especially in term of writing the descriptive paragraphs.

1. Identification of the Problem

Based on the problems depicted in the background of the problem, thus, the problems of this research are identified as follows:

- a. What makes some of the students unable to write the generic structures of descriptive paragraphs?
- b. What makes some of the students unable to demonstrate the main idea of descriptive paragraphs?
- c. What makes some of the students not able to create a complete sentence in descriptive paragraph?
- d. What makes some of the students unable to choose vocabulary appropriately in writing descriptive paragraphs?
- e. What makes some of the students need long time to write?
- f. What makes some of the students not know what to write?

2. Limitation of the Problem

Based on the identification of the problem above, it is clear that there are many problems in this research, thus, the problems of this research are limited only to writing descriptive paragraphs at the first year of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru”

3. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the problem limited above, thus, this research questions are formulated as follows:

- a. How is the students' ability in writing the descriptive paragraphs without using Praise-Questions-Polish(PQP) Strategy in SMAN 5 Pekanbaru
- b. How is the students' ability in writing the descriptive paragraphs by using Praise-Questions-Polish(PQP) Strategy in SMAN 5 Pekanbaru?
- c. Is there any significant effect of using Praise-Questions-Polish(PQP) Strategy on students' ability in writing the descriptive paragraphs in SMAN 5 Pekanbaru?

D. Objective and Significance of the Research

1. Objective of the Research

This research is necessarily carried out in order to achieve the objectives as follows:

- a. To elicit the information about the students' ability in writing descriptive paragraphs taught without using Praise-Questions-Polish(PQP) Strategy at the first year of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru.
- b. To get the information about students' ability in writing paragraphs taught by using Praise-Questions-Polish(PQP) Strategy at the first year of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru.

- c. To find out the significant effect of using Praise-Questions-Polish(PQP) Strategy on students' ability in writing descriptive paragraphs at the first year of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru.

2. Significance of the Research

- a. These research findings are hopefully contributing the writer, especially in term of learning research as a novice researcher.
- b. These research findings are also expected to provide the positive contribution pertaining to the process of teaching and learning English, especially in term of the contribution of using Praise-Question-Polish Strategy on Students' Ability in writing Descriptive Paragraphs at the first year of SMAN 5 Pekanbaru.
- c. These research findings are also expected to be the practices and theories in order to develop the theories on teaching and learning English as a foreign language, and for those who are concerned in the field of language teaching and learning in general.