

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the research, problem of the research, objective of the research, operational definition of the terms, significance of the research and scope of the research.

1.1 Background of the Research

A language is a system of communication which is used by people to interact each other by using sounds, symbols and words to express a meaning, idea or thought. Language can be expressed through many forms, primarily through oral and written communications as well as using expressions through body language. Realizing the importance of English as an international language, Indonesian government considers English as the first foreign language and it has become one of the compulsory subjects which must be taught, start from Junior High School until the advanced education.

There are four skills in English, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing skill. Writing skill is regarded as an important skill that should be mastered because it has always formed part of the syllabus in the teaching of English, although, those skills are actually connecting each other. Writing is the activity of expressing ideas in a written form. Fairbairn and Winch (1996:32) define writing as an activity to convey meaning by selecting words and putting them together in a written or printed form. Furthermore, Sharples (1999: 8) states that, writing is an opportunity, allows

students to express something about themselves, explore and explain ideas. Students can submit their ideas in their minds by organizing them into a good text so other people know them and they can think critically. According to Harmer (2004:28), to make students easy in writing is to let them read examples of the kind of thing we want them to do before we ask them to write. In other words, combining reading first and then writing is an effective strategy to make students produce their writing well.

The important of writing is supported by Harmer (2004:3) who states that in the context of education, it is also worth remembering that most exams, whether they are testing foreign language abilities or other skills, often rely on the students' writing proficiency in order to measure their knowledge. It means that writing skill must be mastered by the students. Writing ability for students refers to the competence of mastering the genre, understanding and producing some kind of texts. In fact, students find difficulties in digging their ideas and formulate them with sufficient vocabulary to construct the text as the generic structure and language feature. Moreover, English in Indonesia is as a Foreign Language. Commonly, in the writing teaching learning process, the teacher just focused on the students' product rather than the process of writing. The students need an effective strategy to be trained to write in English in order to be skilled writers.

According to the researcher when conducted practice teaching (PPL) and the result of informal interview with the English teacher of the eighth grade students of SMPM 6 Wuluhan, it was known that students were lack of vocabularies, the difficulties in analyzing and composing text. Writing and reading have a connection that is influence each other. One of the teaching strategies that can be applied by

combining writing and reading is CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) Strategy. This strategy is suitable to improve their writing skills and CIRC strategy had never been used to teach in writing. In KTSP (*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan*), 2006, the syllabus in the curriculum of junior high school, students are required to be able to write some kind of genre that good in writing, including narrative, recount, descriptive reports, exposition, procedures, and types of other text in a writing subject. In this research, the CIRC strategy is applied in teaching writing especially in the genre of narrative text. It was because narrative text was stated on the second semester of English syllabus for Junior High School.

CIRC strategy is one of the cooperative learning methods. CIRC strategy enables English teachers to teach reading and writing in integrated way. Slavin (1991:12) states that CIRC is a comprehensive strategy to teach writing and language arts for upper elementary and middle grades. The students are assigned into groups to read and discuss the text. Analyzing, summarizing, and composing the text into a piece of paper. Then, they write a text personally.

Considerable researches show that CIRC strategy is one of the effective ways to teach writing. Slavin (1991:15) found the positive effects of CIRC on writing and oral reading skill. In international research, an experiment research conducted by Durukan (2011) that CIRC technique has a significant effect in reading-writing skills in a primary school in the center of Giresun Province, Turkey in the 2009/2010 Academic Year. The research shows that the meaning of the students' reading-writing score in the experimental group is higher than that of the control group. Another research in Indonesia, an action research held by Himawati (2011) has investigated

the use of CIRC method on the eighth grade students' ability in composing narrative writing at MTs Negeri Kudus in the Academic Year 2010/2011. The research shows that the use of CIRC method can improve the students' writing ability. In addition, Rahmawati (2014) conducted the experimental research that the effect of using CIRC Strategy on the seventh grade students' writing ability at SMPN 3 Tanggul in Academic Year 2013/2014. Those researches indicate that CIRC strategy is a comprehensive strategy that can be applied in English language teaching and learning especially in teaching and learning of English as a foreign language context.

Therefore, the researcher will conduct a class action research entitled: "Improving the Students' Writing Ability by Using Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) Strategy at SMPM 6 Wuluhan in the 2016/2017 Academic Year".

1.2 The Problem of the Research

Based on the background above, the problem to be answered in this research was formulated as "How can CIRC strategy improve the eighth grade students' writing ability at SMP Muhammadiyah 6 Wuluhan in the 2016/2017 Academic year?"

1.3 The Objective of the Research

The objective of this research is to improve and to find out the improvement of students' writing ability by using CIRC strategy at SMP Muhammadiyah 6 Wuluhan in the 2016/2017 Academic year.

1.4 Operational Definition of the Research

There are two terms that need to define operationally in order to make a clear illustration about the research.

1) Writing Ability

Writing ability refers to the students' writing competency on composing narrative text by considering the aspect of grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, organization and content.

2) CIRC (Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition)

CIRC is one of the strategies in cooperative learning which is Students-Centered-Learning (SCL) and used to improve students' writing ability. In this research, the group will be consisted of 3 students with heterogeneous abilities, they work with their groups to look for the generic structure and language feature of the narrative text given by the teacher. Then at the end of period, the students will write the narrative text based on the picture that they choose.

1.5 The Significance of the Research

The results of the research were expected to be useful for the students, the English teacher, and other researchers.

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

It is hoped that the result of this research can enrich the theory of writing ability by using CIRC strategy and can be used as reference for those who want to conduct a research in English teaching and learning process.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

The result of the research gives strategy to solve the problem in teaching writing. It can be an input for the English teacher to use or implement CIRC strategy to improve students' ability in writing English.

1.6 The Scope of the Research

This research focuses on investigating the improvement of using CIRC strategy on the eighth grade students' writing ability focusing on the writing narrative text at SMPM 6 Wuluhan in the 2016/2017 Academic year.

