

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this part, the researcher principally deliberates background of the study, statement of problems, objectives of the study, significances of the study, scope and limitation of the study and operational definitions.

1.1 Background of the Study

Teaching and learning English in the educational system in Indonesia is included in the curriculum for elementary school, junior high school, senior high school level, vocational school, and university level. Related to the competence curriculum, the teaching-learning of English has the purpose of developing four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Writing is one of the language skills taught besides the other skills, which is regarded as a productive skill that aims to assist students in expressing their idea written (Batubara, 2017, p. 7). Writing is the most challenging language skill requiring multifaceted thoughtful. In the writing process, people always involve thinking skills and creative skills to make good written work supported by the proper rules. In short, it is implied that writing skill is considered as the most complex language skill to be learned being compared to other language skills.

Writing contributes to studying foreign languages, especially in studying English writing, which requires the ability to comprise meaningful information to straightforwardly understand the written works (Tribble, 1996, p. 3). In addition, writing is a skill required in written communication that is

not easy and might become a challenge for the students at any level of the educational field. Mastering vocabularies and tenses become the primary key to getting good writing, especially in English, by choosing appropriate vocabularies to arrange words to be a sentence and develop them into a good paragraph and written works. Since writing is essential and mastered by the students, they must consider creating and becoming good writers.

There is no doubt writing is the most problematic skill for second language (L2) or even foreign language learners to become skilled at. The difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these ideas into readable texts. In line with Brown (2004, p.218) states as follows:

“We also fully understand the difficulty of learning to write ‘well’ in any language, even in our own native language. Every educated child in developed countries learns the rudiments of writing in his or her native language, but very few learn to express themselves clearly with logical, well-developed organization that accomplishes an intended purpose.”

It is argued as an active or productive skill that is difficult and complex, students who are learning writing have to learn how to find ideas and express them. Furthermore, in writing lessons, students are projected to distinguish the types among the texts be taught. On the other hand, they are also expected to reorganize convinced, and particular texts using their own words or create new ones. Writing is a language skill that needs to be learned. Learning to write is by writing. Nonetheless, some problems block the students to writing that may be inspected from three standpoints,

psychologically, linguistics aspect and cognitive aspect (Byrne, 1988, p. 3). First, psychologically, writing is an independently activity by which each student needs to know what the readers express to read and how to express it in to make the readers get and what they actually want to deliver. Second, writing is more compressed and more formal, therefore, the students are required to pay their attention to linguistic concern like grammatical correctness, appropriate vocabulary use and mechanic. Third, there are cognitive difficulties in which the students have to express thoughts on to the paper for task imposed by the teacher for the exam so forth. Moreover, writing is about delivering content, like knowledge, ideas and experiences and the writer organize them to the readers. To convey what to say in such away, that is understandable, coherence and well organized, are required by the students.

In writing, students need to acquire some aspects such as vocabulary, text structure, cohesive devices, grammar, and punctuation which are useful to learn English to facilitate them for better learning regarding the ability to write in English is needed and significant. Harmer (2001, p.3) argued “The reason why students learn to write is that it is worth remembering that most exams, whether they are testing foreign language abilities or other skills, often rely on the students’ writing proficiency.” It is implied that an English teaching and learning process should include teaching writing in a correct way to help the students develop their capability and ability to produce written language.

In making a written text, there are many matters we have to consider, such as the content, the word choice, text organization, the mechanics, the

grammar, and syntax as writing is considered as an essential matter and becomes the standard of good writing has many requirements. Nevertheless, students might get uninterested if they are taught all of them explicitly. Learning only from course books and student worksheets like mostly Indonesian English classes apply will only create unreceptive learning, and lower students' engagement to the lesson as the learners are speechless with explanations and tasks. Thus, creating a fun English classroom in order to be effective in improving positive attitudes towards learning English is not an easy thing to do that might be due to the lack of time that the teachers have to prepare the media for the teaching and learning activity and the lack of facilities of the schools (Hidayati, 2015, p. 2).

Based on the pre-observation, interviews with English teachers and students, and the results showed some problems of low writing ability of students were found in SDN Petemon X/358 Surabaya. Many students of grade 6th had low writing ability. Their low writing ability was related to content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and writing procedure. Moreover, most of the students in class 6 had difficulties finding the right words to carry their ideas into written works. They often asked their friends or teachers to translate some words in Bahasa Indonesia into the English language. As the students paid much attention to translating words into English, they did not focus on organizing their ideas into an excellent organization. As a result, their paragraphs were not well sequenced. There

were also problems in grammar and in paying attention to the writing rules such as spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Additionally, after leading interviews with the teacher and the students, the researcher found out that the students rarely did writing practices. The teacher only asked them to write a text without any supporting activities when they did into writing practices. The teacher only explained some examples of texts which were often provided using the whiteboard. The specific procedures were not applied in the classroom. Consequently, the students were not interested in the learning process, especially in writing activities.

Concerning the explanations above, the researcher argues that an English teacher must have a suitable technique to make the students interested in writing activities and more enjoyable in the teaching-learning process. Teaching writing with appropriate techniques is crucial to making the writing class more effective, engaging, and enjoyable. The teacher should apply an appropriate technique in teaching writing. The teacher makes the teaching writing process more enjoyable and easier to understand by the students. Dealing with those problems, the researcher proposes the Four-Square Writing method (FSWM) to teach writing skills focusing on the descriptive text for the 6th-grade students at SDN Petemon X/358 Surabaya in the second semester of the academic year 2020/2021. The descriptive text is chosen regarding it is applied in the lesson plans used. The researcher is sure that FSWM is an effective method in conducting writing activity through classroom action

research in case Four Square Writing Technique is a simple graphic organizer to guide students in organizing their thoughts or plans before they write a complete paragraph (Gould & Gould, 1999).

Four-Square Writing Technique teaches basic writing skills applicable to grade levels and curriculum areas, visual displays of important content information designed to assist students who have difficulty organizing information (Bromley, Vitis, & Modlo, 1995, p. 42). Moreover, FSWM is chosen because it has many advantages to apply in teaching writing for students at any level and can be suitable to be practical for the narrative, descriptive, expository, and persuasive forms of writing. FSWM has clear steps to follow, so students will not be confused and use interesting features to minimize uninterest among students. The students be accustomed to writing systematically within the step-by-step approach used. Using FSWM, the students will break through the ideas to write and explore the complex ideas in writing. As a result, they might write their written works systematically in an organized way. Therefore, the researcher entitled “*Improving the Ability of the 6th Grade Students at SDN Petemon X/358 Surabaya to Write Descriptive Texts Using Four-Square Technique*”.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

To clarify the result of the research, the researcher formulated the research problem, namely:

- 1.2.1 To what extent the implementation of Four-Square Technique will improve the students' ability to write descriptive texts at SDN Petemon X/358 Surabaya?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Related to the problems formulated, this research has the purpose:

- 1.3.1 To know what the implementation of Four-Square Technique will improve the students' ability to write descriptive texts at SDN Petemon X/358 Surabaya.

1.4 Hypothesis

Based on the formulated problem and the objective of the research, the hypothesis was formulated as follows: the four-square technique will improve the student's ability to write descriptive texts at SDN Petemon X/358 Surabaya.

1.5 Significances of the Study

The significances of the research are directed to:

- 1.5.1 Teachers

It is extremely suggested English teachers apply various of strategies to be completely organized in teaching writing. The four-square writing technique should be provided the chance to knowledge and exercise learning approaches. Next, by applying this technique,

English teachers can develop the teaching and learning methods in writing creatively so that the learning quality will advance.

1.5.2 Students

The results of the research will give additional acquaintance about the thoughtful of the four-square writing technique in order to learn writing descriptive text. Then, it can help the students to know their strength and weakness in writing, and will encourage them to improve their writing competence. They will also know to what extent they can understand the use of four-square writing technique in descriptive text. They can study to write hard to prove they can write properly.

1.5.3 Other Researchers

The results of this research, it is recommended further researches be conducted to ensure the four-square writing technique is a truthfully valuable strategy for educating students' accomplishment. This research will give deeper understanding other researchers to conduct the similar research which may change the teachers continue to use the four-square writing technique on regular learning process. Sustained apply of four-square writing technique may encourage the students' ability to explore more active in writing activities.

1.6 Scopes and Limitations

In conducting the research, the researcher had some limitations. This research was conducted at SDN Petemon X/358 Surabaya. Then, the research subjects were the 6th-grade students' class 6-A at SDN Petemon X/358 Surabaya in the academic year 2020/2021. The researcher conducted the Classroom Action Research (CAR) using the Four-Square Writing Technique (FSWT) focusing on the process and product of students' writing. The researcher focused only on how to improve students' writing skills. The material is limited to descriptive texts.

1.7 Operational Definitions

To make the research's terms more clearly, the researcher provided some explanations about the terms used in this research, namely:

- 1.6.1 Four-Square Writing Technique (FSWT) is an essential writing skill that uses a step-by-step approach built around a simplified graphic organizer as a visual framework for assisting students with formulating ideas in an organized manner before writing texts.
- 1.6.2 Writing is the way to express feelings and thoughts to other people with meanings in the written form.
- 1.6.3 Writing Skill is one of the four English skills being taught in the school.
- 1.6.4 Descriptive Text is a text describing people, animals or things is like.