

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **I. Background of the Study**

English is an international language used by almost all people around the world. English has become an important language to master in this globalization era. It is a tool to communicate with others both in the written and spoken forms.

In English, there are four basic skills namely speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Baker, 2001, p.6). Speaking and listening support oral communication, meanwhile reading and writing help in written communication.

In the process of learning English, writing is one of the four skills that must be mastered in order to acquire the target language. Writing is important because it improves communication skills, creative thinking, and creativity.

Writing is the process of producing words in a form so that it can be read and understood. Siahaan (2007: 215) says that writing is a physiological activity of the language user to write information in the written text. Writing in a group is a very effective tool to generate ideas and for getting a job done.

There are many techniques that are available for teachers. Techniques can help students to understand what they have been studying better. Cooperative learning is one of the techniques that is good to teach English skills, especially for writing. Cooperative learning means that the students work in a small group. Cooperative writing lets the students work together to reach the goal. According to

Kagan (1989) the teacher plans the social interaction as well as learning activities. Abrami, Poulsen & Chambers (2004) define Cooperative Learning (CL) as “an instructional strategy in which students work actively and purposefully together in small groups to enhance both their own and their teammates’ learning.”

Collaborative writing is a “highly essential writing and group act in which prominence is likely to increase”, according to Lowry, Curtis, and Lowry (2004, p. 66). Rice and Huguley (1994) offer a definition which emphasizes on the primary activities of collaborative writing; it is performed collectively by more than one person to produce a single text and writing is any activity that leads to a completed document, including idea generating, researching, planning, and organizing, drafting, revising, and editing.

Students often have a difficult time creating ideas and supporting a topic; writing possibly may not provide them to communicate with others. Meanwhile, communication is very important for students to share their ideas and make creative ideas. Communication allows students to think deeply about the topic given so they can create a good composition in writing text. Collaborative writing provides the oral prompts of conversation to help students bridge oral and written language. A real strength of collaborative writing is by arranging the ideas together, observing others’ minds, and as co-authors, revealing other’s thinking strategies and modeling other’s writing processes. Those allow students to learn from one another in a natural way.

According to KTSP (2007), there are eight kinds of genres in writing for Senior High School students, such as procedure, descriptive, recount, narrative, report, analytical exposition, hortatory exposition, and spoof.

The writer chooses descriptive writing in conducting her study because descriptive is one type of writing which is challenging since it demands students' ability in finding vivid appropriate ideas and words to make a good composition (Goffman, 1956:35). The students have to choose the right diction so when the readers read the text, they will feel as if people, place and things that are being described are real. The descriptive writing is also included in the syllabus of the eight graders'.

The study was conducted with the aim of finding out the effect of collaborative writing to the students' descriptive writing. The writer took eight grade students as the samples of her study. This study was conducted in a Catholic Junior High School in Surabaya.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The study is an attempt to find out the effect of collaborative writing on the descriptive writing of grade 8 students. In line with the background of the study, the research question is formulated as follows:

Is there any significant difference between the descriptive writing score of the students taught using collaborative writing and that of those taught using individual writing?

### **1.3 Objective of the study**

The objective of the present study is to find out whether there is any significant difference between the descriptive writing score of the students taught using collaborative writing and those taught using individual writing.

### **1.4 Theoretical Framework**

This study is based on the theory of collaborative writing and the concept of descriptive writing. According to Storch (2013), collaboration means the sharing of labour (co-labour) and thus collaborative writing, in its broadest sense, means the co-authoring of a text by two or more writers. Some writing scholars (e.g. Bruffee, 1984; Harris, 1994) assert that all writing is collaborative to some extent. Individual writers composing with a certain reader in mind or seeking assistance from others at some stage of their writing can be said to engage in collaborative writing. Under such a broad definition, peer editing or peer planning would also qualify as collaborative writing. Cited from Stahl (2006), it should be noted that the outcome of a collaborative writing activity is not only text which is produced together. It is also collective cognition, appearing when two or more people get an idea that neither could have reached alone, and that cannot be explored back at individual's

contribution. Collaborative writing involves learners interacting in pairs or small groups on a writing task.

A descriptive text is a writing which describes or captures both details and wholeness and selecting specific, vivid details of person, place, or things (McCrimmon, 1984:163). In order to write a good descriptive text, students need to have a strategy for presenting a verbal portrait of a person, place, or thing. The writer needs inspiration by communicating with others so he or she can arrange a good descriptive text.

### **1.5 Hypotheses**

Based on the theoretical framework above, the questions of the present study could be tentatively answered. Thus the following hypotheses are formulated as follows:

#### Null Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between the descriptive writing score of the students taught using collaborative writing and those taught using individual writing.

#### Alternative Hypothesis

There is any significant difference between the descriptive writing score of the students taught using collaborative writing and those taught using individual writing.

## **1.6 Assumptions**

This study is based on the assumptions that the effect of two different techniques used in teaching English language skill was comparable and the level of the students in both groups were similar.

## **1.7 Scope and Limitation of the Study**

It is a quasi-experimental method with two group pre-test and post-test design from grade 8 of a Catholic Junior High School in Surabaya. The study tries to find out the effectiveness of using collaborative writing on the students' descriptive writing. This technique is compared with individual writing. This study focuses on the descriptive writing of collaborative writing and individual writing. Descriptive writing is a text which describes about person, place, and also things.

## **1.8 Significance of the Study**

This study is theoretically beneficial to support the Storch's theory (2013) which states that collaborative writing involves learners interacting in pairs or small groups on a writing task. Collaborative writing supports students in learning how to make a good paragraph, for example in making descriptive writing text. Collaborative writing lets the students think more creatively and encourage them to make improvement.

The findings of this study are expected to the teaching in classroom. It will be useful for the process of teaching writing in the class because the teacher can use

collaborative writing technique as a tool to teach writing and help the students become effective writers and teachers become effective facilitators. It is expected to give a clear picture that collaborative writing seems to be potential way to teach writing for students who assume that writing might be a confusing and boring activity.

### **1.9 Definition of Key-Terms**

#### a. Collaborative Writing

Collaborative writing is one of activities involved in the production of a document by more than one author, then predraft discussions and arguments as well as post-draft analyses and debates are collaborative components. (Storch, 2005).

#### b. Individual Writing

Individual writing is a process of writing done by an individual without others' help. By individual writing, an individual can develop his/her ability.

#### c. Descriptive writing

Descriptive writing is a writing which describes or captures both details and wholeness and selecting specific, vivid details of person, place, or things (McCrimmon 1984:163).

### **1.10 Organization of the Study**

The study consists of five chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction which includes the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the study, the definition of the key terms, and the organization of the study. Chapter II focuses on the review of the related literature which consists of the related theories and the related to previous study. Chapter III concerns in the methodology that the writer used. Chapter IV contains the findings and the discussion. The last which is chapter V prescribes of the conclusion and suggestions of the study.