

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In learning a foreign language such as English, the Senior High School students should learn 4 skills namely ; Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. According to 1984 Curriculum of Senior High School, among those skills, reading has an important part in learning English.¹ Here, although the reading skill is emphasized, it does not mean that the other skills are neglected.

To Byrne² learning a language is not only learning to speak and to read but also learning a set of skills. The set of skills he means are reading, listening, speaking, and writing. In the formal teaching, these four skills should be taught to the students, so at the end of the study they are supposed to have the ability to use them.

Although writing is one of the foreign language skills which has to be learned by the Senior High School students, sometimes writing is considered as an

¹Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, Kurikulum Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA), Garis-Garis Besar Program Pengembangan (GBPP) Bidang Studi Bahasa Inggris Jakarta, 1984.

²Donn Byrne, English Teaching Extract, Green and Co., Ltd., 1969, P. 12.

uninteresting subject. Almost all the exercises of teaching writing found in the Senior High School students' reference book (Active English for SMA and Bahasa Inggris untuk SMA 'e') are copying the paragraphs, changing the names of persons and cities, and substituting the subjects.³ However, these types of exercises are not interesting and do not trigger the students' creativity. Therefore, it is important for the teachers to know how to make the students interested in writing and how to handle them in order to make a good composition.

The word 'writing' is really familiar to us. People need writing not only at school but also in daily life such as taking messages, taking notes, writing letters, invitations et cetera. Clouse states that writing' is really important not only at school but also in society', she strongly claims,

"If you think writing is a skill you need in order to succeed in college, you're right. If you think writing is a skill you need in order to perform well on the job, you right again. However, if you think writing is important and useful only at school and work, you're wrong. Writing can help you solve problems, work through confusion, come up with new ideas, and observe more of the world".⁴

³Dady Mulyo, et al, Active English for SMA IIA, Bina Pustaka Tama, Surabaya, 1988.

⁴Barbara Fine Clouse, Writing from Inner to Outer World, Mc. Graw-Hill, America, 1983, P.3.

Talking about the same thing Paulston and Bruder state that :

"Skill in writing is a basic necessity in the academic environment, and even the non academic student who has no need to write reports and papers will occasionally need to write letters, messages, memos, invitations, and the like."⁵

Writing is also important in learning a language since learning a language is not a matter of acquiring a set of rules and building up a large vocabulary, but also having the ability to use them to understand the language as well as to produce it in an oral or written way."

In teaching writing teachers have to train the students step by step, slowly, and patiently since writing needs a systematic thinking process which can not be taught in a short time and without practice.⁷ The teacher gave some exercises as practice such as : giving the students a model passage and asking them to paraphrase it, to write a summary of it, or to outline it, or they may be given a reading passage with parts missing and they have to complete it.⁸ Those exercises seem difficult for students

⁵Christina Bratt Paulston and Mary. N. Bruder, Teaching Writing English as a Second Language : Techniques and Procedure, Winthrop Publisher, Inc, Massachusetts, 1979, P. 236.

⁶L.G. Alexander, Practice and Progress, Longman Group Limited, London, 1967, P. xv

⁷Mary S, Lawrence, Writing as Thinking Process, The University of Michigan, 1975, P. 13.

⁸Ann Raimes, Techniques in Teaching Writing, Oxford University Press, New York, 1983, P. 33.

especially the Senior High School students because they have limited knowledge of the target language besides writing skill is rarely taught in SMA.

Thus in this paper, the writer presents a library research dealing with teaching writing in SMA. The idea of presenting this technique appeared when the writer had read a book entitled ("practice and Progress" written by Alexander.² In that book he presents a set of questions dealing with a short paragraph that are planned properly. The questions become a guidance for the students to make statements which are based on directly the passage they have read as well as to gather information they need to form a composition.

Considering the above facts, in this paper the writer attempts to offer a way to teach writing that is suitable for the Senior High School students in order to help the students in writing an English composition.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As implied in the background of the study, the problem is 'How can a set of well-planned questions help the teacher teach controlled writing skill in Senior High School ?'

²L.G. Alexander, Op. Cit, P. xv

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

In this study, the writer tries to find out how a set of well-planned questions can contribute teaching writing in Senior High School.

1.4 Limitation of The Study

The discussion of the study will concern only with teaching controlled writing for the SMA Students.

The kind of writing being used is narrative composition.

The technique being discussed is dealing with questions that guide the students in making composition. The writer concentrates only on :

1.4.1. Questions dealing with a reading passage.

1.4.2. Questions dealing with a series of pictures.

1.4.3. Questions dealing with a dialogue.

1.4.4. Questions dealing with an advertisement.

1.5 Definition of the Key Term

The title of this paper is "A Suggested Technique of Using A Set of Hell-Planned Questions in Teaching Controlled Writing", suggests the following terms to be explained :

Writing is an action of composing and comitting to manuscript expression of thought or ideas in written

word.¹⁰ To Francis, writing is systematic, visible and permanent representation of auditory and transient phenomena of speech.¹¹ In addition, to the writer's opinion, writing means an activity of using words on a page to communicate to the reader.

According to Paulston, controlled writing is a composition where, by certain controls, students are helped to produce a correct composition to the model.¹²

A sentence is a group of words that makes a complete statement.¹³ It means that a sentence is words combined by words to form one meaning.

A paragraph is composed of a group of sentences expressing one central idea.¹⁴ A paragraph according to Sanford is a series of sentences that tells about a single idea, person, object or event.¹⁵ In other words a paragraph is a unit of sentences that represent one idea about something that is heard or known by somebody

¹⁰Oxford Dictionary, Oxford University Press.

¹¹W. Nelson Francis, The Structure of American English, The Ronald Press Company, New York, 1956, P. 433.

¹²Christina B. Paulston and Mary N. Bruder, Op. Cit., P. 207.

¹³Andrian B. Sanford, Using English Grammar and Writing Skills, Third Edition, Harcourt Brace, Jovanovich, 1977, P. 67.

¹⁴Kathleen E. Sullivan, Paragraph Practice, Third Edition, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1976, P.1.

¹⁵Andrian B. Sanford, Op. Cit., P. 126

Guralink says that technique is the method of procedure in artistic work, scientific activity, etc.¹⁶

The questions that the writer means are some questions based on the material given either factual questions or yes/ no questions. Those questions should be complementary to each other so that they will help the students make a composition.

1.6 Theoretical F_____

There are theories underlying this study. They are theories of writing and theories of controlled writing.

Writing in learning a language is considered as a means of communication. Yet, the communication is different from speech. In writing we use our hands to make a symbol on a page, while in speech we use our mouth to produce sounds.¹⁷

In communication, then, a writer should demonstrate his ability to organize the idea in order to be understood by the reader. Therefore, writing needs a process of thinking', as Finocchiaro says that writing has been characterized as written thinking. Students should be

¹⁶David B. Guralink, ed., Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language, New York, Simon and Schuster Inc., 1984, P. 614.

¹⁷Geoffrey Thronton, Teaching Writing. The Development of Written Language Skills, Bungay Suffolk, Great Britain Clay Ltd., 1980, P. 11.

encouraged to express their ideas, experiences, thoughts and feelings.¹⁸

To Ann Raimes, controlled writing is all the writing students do for which a great deal of the content and/or form is supplied.¹⁹

The questions used in this technique is a set of questions dealing with material given to the students (a reading passage, a dialogue, a series of pictures and an advertisement). The questions here are designed to elicit simple statements that will be put together by using connecting words to join ideas. The ideas are derived from each material and will be joined together to form a short paragraph.²⁰

1.7 Organization of The Thesis

This Thesis consists of 4 chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the Introduction. The second chapter will deal with the theory of writing. The third chapter will present the Technique of Using Questions. The last chapter will deal with Conclusion and Suggestions.

¹⁸Mary Finocchiaro and Michael Bonomo, The Foreign Language Learner. A Guide for Teacher, New York Regents and Publishing Company, Inc., 1973, P. 116.

¹⁹Ann Raimes, Op. Cit., P. 95.

²⁰L.G. Alexander, DD. Cit., P. XV.