

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

In teaching and learning process, the using of good and appropriate learning materials can help and support the successfulness of presenting materials, because the better quality of learning materials causes learning process runs more effectively and productively. Learning materials are used as one of learning sources which facilitate students with a lot of information in various learning topics. Therefore, the contents or topics in the learning materials should be considered.

According to Tomlinson (2012: 143), there are some characteristics of the learning material. First, it is called as informative and instructional material, because it informs about the target language which guides the learners to practice themselves about the language. Second, it is called eliciting and exploratory because the learning material can help students to make some discoveries while using the language and last, it is called as experiential because learning material is not only expected as a source of information but also as a tool which can guide the students to explore their experience related to the materials. So that they will get a meaningful learning process.

In line with the importance of selecting materials, Dirgeyasa (2014) explains that providing appropriate learning materials based on students' need is important,

because the using of the materials significantly determine the achievement of teaching and learning.

Learning English as a second language gives a challenge to the students in mastering English language, especially in writing skill. Students are not only expected to be able to write their ideas into text but also to transfer the text into English well. This process is so complicated for students and it is normal if many of them get difficulties in writing, because they will find some differences between Indonesian language and English language in the terms of the language structures and the language features. Therefore, As one of an important skills in English, writing requires special attention in presenting the materials. The learning materials must be able to provide a lot of various information about writing in English and also able to guide the learners improve their writing skill.

Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia makes a provision in book publishing policy. It is said that every coursebook must provide activities which relate to the materials explanation and also connect to the active learning process namely observing, questioning, experimenting/exploring, associating and communicating stages based on Curriculum 2013 implementation as cited in the regulation of Minister of Education and Culture of Indonesia number 81 A in 2013.

In writing, those activities can be elaborated in term of writing process or writing stages which are useful for students to improve their writing skill through

some steps which guide them to explore their ideas, share their experiences even state their arguments by writing the ideas into text systematically.

According to Hyland (2002:91) writing is a recursive process which consists of some stages namely prewriting, writing, editing, revising, publication and appreciation. All of the stages are aimed to improve students writing skill through some revisions and help the learners to evaluate how well they have developed a text to give meaningful information for the readers.

In addition, Martin in Dirgayasa (2016) adds that writing is viewed as a product and it can be produced by followed some phases. In line with Martin, Firkins, Forey, and Sengupta (2007) as cited in Dirgayasa (2016) define writing as “cyclic strategic” which consists of three stages, they are: (a) modelling a text; (b) joint construction of a text; (c) independent construction of a text.

Unfortunately, not all of the students are able to write genre writing well although the writing process or writing stages have been provided. This statement is proved based on an observation which conducted on 7th April 2017 at SMA Negeri 1 Binjai by interviewing the English teacher about the teaching-learning process. At that time, the teacher was given seven questions which were related to; whether the first grade students were able to write some types of texts (descriptive text and recount text) structurally, whether the students had had significant ability in writing by applying the existing materials in the coursebook, whether the students motivated to write, whether the material provided familiar topics, whether the materials related to the students’ real experience, culture and

environment (contextualization), whether the coursebook provided writing stages in the writing section and what weaknesses the coursebook had.

From conducting the observation, some clarifications were obtained; some first grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Binjai were not able to write some genre writing well. More than 50% students still got low score although the writing stages had been provided in the materials. The score was lower than the *KKM* (75).

This data were obtained based on teacher's clarification and the observation of students' score while writing some types of genre writing include descriptive text and recount text in their exercise books.

Many students were not motivated and interested to write because the contents of the selected topics in the coursebook did not apply contextualization. All of the topics are not related to students' real experience and environment. This situation influenced students to copy and to imitate their friends' creation to finish their task easily. As the result, they were lazy to write and they had low competence in writing.

According to Afzal et al (2010) student motivation is the element that leads students' attitude towards learning process, and academic performance is positively influenced by students' motivation. If the students are not interested in learning the topics, they will not write appropriately, then they are not able to improve their writing skill. As the result they will have low competence in writing, moreover they will get low score in learning and the learning objective will be hard to be achieved.

The preliminary data showed that, there was a connection among uncontextualized topics, students' motivation and students' achievement toward students' competence in writing.

According to Tomlinson (2010: 5) learning materials must apply contextualization, because the materials will invite students' motivation in learning and the students will easily visualize and connect their own experiences to the learning material. As the result, the student will enjoy the learning process.

In addition, Baker et al. (2009: 8) states that providing authentic materials based on students' experience which relate to their life are useful for the students to find the relevance of the information to create a pathway for understanding the material and influence the students to start to write. It can help the students to get a meaningful learning process through experience.

Based on the implementation of the syllabus in curriculum 2013, the first grade students only focus on two types of texts in writing skill, they are: Descriptive text and Recount text. Meanwhile, the coursebook which was used by the first grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Binjai cannot provide specific contextualized materials in writing. The materials were still too general to involved students' personal experiences. The uncontextual writing materials involve two chapters. The first chapter is about descriptive text material. The topics are "Niagara Fall, Taj Mahal and Tanjung Puting National Park". All these topics are not contextualized with students' environments even their own personal experiences. No students ever go there. They try describe places where they never

visited yet. It will be better if the materials are about places around them, like their home, tourists spot in Binjai and etc. The material will be more concretely.

The second writing material is recount text, the topics are about the historical events like “ The battle of Surabaya”, “ Biography of B.J. Habibie and Cut Nyak Dhien”. These topics were good to build students’ nationalism, unfortunately, these topics cannot connect students’ real experience to the learning process. These topics only let the students to imagine the historical events through the past history that they ever heard for several times. This condition is obviously contradictable with the main concept of contextualized materials.

Meanwhile the basic competence of writing recount text for the first grade students is not specifically mentioned to retell the historical events but the materials must able to provide simple recount text about event or experience based on appropriate contexts which can be related to students’ real life or students’ real experience.

Curriculum 2013 emphasize an active learning process, therefore contextualized material is absolutely needed to provide in writing material to support the existing material. If the materials combine contextualization and writing stages properly, the learning objective will strongly achieved, because the materials do not only focus in providing a lot of information in writing but also how the materials can build learners’ motivation and interest towards the learning process through the learners’ experience.

This statement was supported by Dirgeyasa (2016). He states that genre in writing covers two distinctive dimension. First, genre writing as a process or strategy of how the writing is developed, taught and learned. Second, genre writing is viewed as a product of writing. He states,

Genre as a product means that genre writing is a kind of text or writing work itself. It views that the language (writing form) must be related to social function of the text. Social function of the text, then implies to certain social environment and place where and when the text is used. This of course, will vary because of different context and situation.

It means that writing materials must able to make a balancing in the terms of the product view and the process view. The writing materials do not only cover the steps of writing but also provide suitable contents of the material which can match with the users. If this importance is filled, then students' motivation and their interest in learning will be increase and it will influence students' writing competence in writing genre texts. Therefore, developing writing material based on contextualization is absolutely need.

Tomlinson (2012) states that materials development is needed to make some evaluation, improvement and adaptation in order to support an effective and efficient learning process. Because of that reasons, the development of writing materials for the first grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Binjai is needed. The writing materials for the first grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Binjai were developed by implementing contextualization in designing the materials and still providing writing stages within it. Therefore, the developed materials are expected

to be able to motivate the students to develop their writing skill actively in order to support a successful achievement of the learning objectives.

B. Identification of the Problems

Based on the background above, there were some problems related to the teaching-learning process in writing at SMA Negeri 1 Binjai, those problems can be seen as follow:

First, the students were confused to write their ideas and difficult to arrange the ideas systematically into correct generic structures. Second, the students have low motivation in learning because they are not interested to the content of the materials. Third, more than 50% students have low competence in writing.

Fourth, the teacher get difficulties in making some creative improvement of the learning materials and difficult to attract students' motivation in learning and Fifth, the content of the writing materials do not cover and provide students' need completely in the terms of contextualization and writing process. As the result, many students are not interested and lazy to write, they also have low competence in writing.

Because of the limitation of knowledge and time in investigating the whole problems above, therefore this research only focus on developing writing materials for the first grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Binjai based on students' need and curriculum implemented.

C. The Problems of the Study

Based on the explanation in the background of study, the problems of this research are formulated as follow:

1. What are English writing materials needed for the first grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Binjai?
2. How are English writing materials based on contextualization developed for the first grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Binjai?

D. The Objectives of the Study

Based on the problems of the study, the objective of this study are:

1. To investigate the relevant English writing materials for the first grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Binjai.
2. To develop the relevant English writing materials through contextualization for the first grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Binjai.

E. The Scope of the Study

This research only focuses on developing writing materials based on contextualization which are relevant for the first grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Binjai.

F. The Significance of the Study

The finding of this research can be useful both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research can provide information and theories about

developing English writing materials based on contextualization. Meanwhile, practically it can be useful for:

1. Teachers

This research is expected to be a reference for English teacher who attempt to develop English writing materials which are suitable with students' need.

2. Students

The product of this research is expected to be a reference for students as materials which able to improve their writing competence based on their own experience.

3. Other researcher

This research is expected to be a reference for other researcher who want to conduct a similar research about developing writing materials.