

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

In Indonesia, English is a foreign language which is taught in every educational level, from Elementary School up to university. Therefore, in Senior High School or *Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA)* and Vocational High School or *Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan (SMK)*, English is a compulsory subject which is taught and learnt in a formal education. English for Vocational High School is meant as a tool of communication (spoken or written) that is used not only to express information, thoughts or ideas, but also to develop sciences, technologies, and cultures. English which is taught at Vocational High School involves four skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. All of those skills are should be mastered by the students and they cannot be separated from one another. Among those skills, writing skill is emphasized at school for vocational students especially for Pharmacy students. Related with writing skill, pharmacy students need to have qualified to write prescription, prepare and create medicine under the supervision of a pharmacist.

Talking about writing, writing is one of the skills that have to be mastered by the students of English Language Teaching Program. Writing is a productive skill. The productive writing skill is considered a cognitive challenge, because it helps to assess language competency, recalling capability and thinking ability. However it must be through a process which is not easy to get it through. Students need more attention when they learn the rules or the steps from writing form.

Writing skill need seriousness, willingness and hard working to someone can improve their writing skill by practicing.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) state that good materials do not teach but encourage learners to learn. Good material should provide clear and coherent unit structure which will help students in understanding the lesson through various tasks, and also materials provide models at correct and appropriate language use. Tomlinson (1998) stated that materials should help learners to feel at ease – students should feel comfortable and relaxed with materials. Materials should provide the learners with opportunities to use the target language to achieve communicative purposes. However, most teachers in Indonesia still rely on textbooks as the primary teaching resource. Although the materials in the textbook have been matched with the existing basic competence in the curriculum, the contents are still not relevant with students.

On 07th of April 2017, an interview was conducted to the English teacher of the grade ten students in SMK YPFSU Medan to get the preliminary data. Some questions were given to the teachers, for instance *What English textbook is used for the grade ten students?*, *How well the students know or recognise the topic explained in the reading text?* *How is the students participation in class especially in learning English?*.

Based on the teacher's response, the textbook used for the grade ten students is the book given by the Ministry of Education and Culture "*Bahasa Inggris – SMA/MA/SMK/MAK Kelas X Semester 1, Kurikulum 2013*". The materials in the existing textbooks are good, and prepared in accordance with the curriculum in the education system of Indonesia. However, in terms of contents, the materials are too general and not appropriate to the the students. It is clarified by the teacher who says

that the topics are not really recognized by students. It makes them difficult to comprehend the text. Because not only they have to comprehend the text, but they also have to imagine how the topics in the texts look like. Thus, the students are not really interested in learning process that then lead to the low participation in class. This problem must be solved to increase students' ability in learning English.

In addition, to organize classroom on writing material is not a well-designed. To organize classroom can be the solution for improving students' skills. Richards and Renandya (2002:49-50) state that cooperative learning promotes better learning because of some advantages such as it has a greater motivation for learning, a more relaxed atmosphere, more negotiation of meaning, and a greater amount of comprehensible input. So, designing the writing material based on cooperative learning is absolutely needed.

This study will focus on developing English writing materials (the exercises) based on cooperative learning for the grade ten students in SMK YPFSU Medan. The use of cooperative learning can make students easier and more interested in learning English. These new English reading materials will be totally different with the existing one, because the topics are much more familiar to the students so they will be more active in the learning process as what they are going to learn is something that they can easily relate to. Hopefully, the students will be motivated to develop their writing skills by having writing practices using cooperative learning.

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the background above, there are some problems related to the English teaching-learning process at SMK YPFSU Medan, they are:

First, the existing reading materials of descriptive text are not appropriate to the students. Second, the students get difficulties in comprehending the English writing text, as they can not relate directly to the texts they learn. It makes students uninterested in learning English.

Because of the limitation of knowledge and time in investigating the English teaching-learning process in this study, therefore this research will just focus on developing English writing materials based on cooperative learning.

C. Problem of The Study

Based on the identification of problem above, the problems of study is, “How the English writing materials based on cooperative learning are designed for the grade ten students of SMK YPFSU Medan?”

D. Objective of The Study

In line with the problem of study, the objectives of this research are as follow: To design the English writing materials based on cooperative learning that are appropriately developed for students of SMK YPFSU Medan.

E. Scope of The Study

This study will be focused on developing English writing materials based on cooperative learning. It will be applied in the grade ten students of SMK YPFSU Medan. The skill that will be concerned on is writing.

F. 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 by using cooperative learning. Meanwhile, practically it can be useful for:

1. Teacher, especially for senior high school teacher in SMK YPFSU Medan, this research can be a reference in attempting to develop English learning materials.
2. The students, the students can get more motivation to learn English. They can practice to broaden their knowledge in writing material.
3. Other researcher, this research can be a reference to the next researcher who want to conduct a research about developing learning materials by using cooperative learning.