

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Four major skills in communicating through language are often broadly defined as listening, speaking, reading and writing. All of these language skills are very important to everyone especially for students to become fluent in English. The reading and listening skills are known as input skills, whereas the speaking and writing are output skills.

Writing a foreign language is probably the hardest skill to be learnt. This is because the complexity of the written language compared to the spoken one is much greater. Students will learn how to compose sentences, the correct usage of grammar and how to spell. If students are good in reading, listening and speaking English, the writing skill will eventually follow. When practicing writing it's better for students to take notes. This way, they will automatically progress their writing ability. If students keep practicing, they will eventually be fluent in all areas of the English language.

Writing is an important skill that provides individuals with a way to communicate, an outlet for expression, reflection, and the means to record or history. Writing proficiency does not develop instantaneously; it is a continuous process that adapts and changes with one's experiences and education.

The activity of teaching writing can be such reinforcement about the language that the students have learnt, language development, learning style for the teaching - learning process, and the most important thing, because writing is one of four language skills which have to be taught to the students to develop their communicative competence.

Students need to know how to write letters, put written reports together, reply to advertisements and increasingly, write using electronic media. They need to know some of writing's special conventions (punctuation, paragraph construction etc.) just as they need to know how to pronounce spoken English appropriately. Like many other aspects of English language teaching.

In general, teacher will try to get students writing in a number of common everyday styles. These will include writing postcards, letters of various kinds, filling in forms such a job applications, writing narrative compositions, reports, newspaper and magazine articles etc.

In teaching, teacher should have to consider many aspects of teaching learning process, such as teaching methods that used by teachers. It is important for teachers used many kinds of teaching learning process. Over the years, many different teaching methods have been created; some were developed by educational researchers investigating how children learn. Others were developed by classroom teachers in order to solve specific classroom problems. Joyce (1972) labeled six teaching Methods, they are:

Table 1.1.1 The classification of six methods of teaching

Traditional/ teacher- centered	Constructivist/ Student-centered
Lecturer/presentation	Cooperative learning
Direct instruction	Problem-Based-Learning
Concept teaching	Classroom discussion

(source: Arends, 2004: 26)

Joyce (1972) labeled each of this method is more than a specific method or strategy. It's an overall plan, or pattern, for helping students to learn specific kinds of knowledge, attitudes, or skills. (Arends, 2004: 26). These kinds of models had shown us that there are so many choices of teaching methods that can be done by teachers in order to deliver their subjects. With that various teaching methods, hopefully teachers can teach writing to the students well.

Unfortunately, the teaching of writing is not much paid attention to English teaching in this Senior High Vocational school named SMK MULTI KARYA. Based on the previous sentences about teaching writing and teaching methods that already mentioned, in fact, in Senior High Vocational school named SMK MULTI KARYA, where the research was done, the teaching writing did not achieve the target as in Educational Unit Oriented Curriculum 2006 (*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan; KTSP*). The list of score found by the researcher in this school can be shown through the table below:

Table 1.1.2 English monthly data of SMK MULTI KARYA medan 2009/2010

No	Language Skill	Median Score each Classes						Mean
		XI-1	XI-2	XI-3	XI-4	XI-5	XI-6	
1	Listening	69,7	70,2	67,8	64,8	62,6	70,4	69,25
2	Speaking	68,6	66,3	63,2	65,4	65,8	64,4	65,62
3	Reading	72,1	72,6	71,5	72,5	72	68,9	71,55
4	Writing	60,7	59,4	62,1	57,3	58	58,7	59,35

(source: Monthly data of students result in SMK MULTI KARYA 2009/2010)

Based on the score of students list above, it was found out that teaching English hasn't been satisfied especially in writing skill.

The weakness of teaching writing is caused by many factors, such as the appropriateness of method used, as already mention previously, there are: lecturer/presentation teaching method, direct instruction, and concept teaching for teacher centered teaching method and cooperative learning, problem-based-learning, classroom discussion for student centered teaching method.

Students and teachers in this school usually learn and teach with one kind of teaching method, which is traditional method that focus on the teacher, so the students always waiting for teacher's information and explanation about the subject of material. Based on that situation, the researcher thinks of coloring teaching methods in this school by adding variety of teaching methods. In teaching writing, it is better to measure how the students able to write in their own words and elaborate their creativity and deliver their idea communicatively in writing. In order to make an active situation teaching learning process, problem-based-learning and direct instruction are suggested to be compared in this school.

Problem-based-learning was not designed to help teachers convey huge quantities of information to students. Direct instruction is better suited to this purpose rather PBL was designed primarily to help students develop their thinking, problem solving and intellectual skills; learn adults roles by experiencing them through real or simulated situations; and become independent in the relationship of writing skill, students try to develop their thinking creativity and put it down on the written form communicatively with their own words. In problem based learning, students didn't wait for teachers' explanation, but through some situation or problem that given by teacher, they try to

develop their thinking to solve in written form. Then make kinds of conclusion together with the teacher.

Direct instruction is different with problem-based-learning. If in PBL students didn't wait for teacher's explanation in direct instruction teacher gives set of explanation and demonstration, gives examples and the solving also then students asked to make another examples based on the instruction of teacher.

Based on the situation and problems explained previously, this study about students' achievement in writing ability must emphasize students' interest, confidence, and ability building into consideration to the improvement of teaching learning methods. One of the methods recommended solving the problems is PBL. But is it true that pbl is the best way? Does PBL really work? How does it work if compared with direct instruction method that already being used in this vocational school? That is why this study is conducted to know whether the achievement of students taught by PBL is higher than direct instruction in order to provide better achievement for students.

1.2 The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study previously stated, the problems are formulated as follows:

1. Is the students' achievement in writing taught by using PBL higher than those taught by using direct instruction?
2. Is the students' achievement in writing that have high communicative competence which taught by using PBL higher than the students' achievement in writing that have low communicative competence which taught by using Direct Instruction?

3. Is there any significant interaction between teaching methods and communicative competence in teaching writing?

1.3 The Objective of the Study

The study is intended to find out:

- 1) to find out whether the students' achievement in writing taught by using PBL is higher than those taught by using direct instruction.
- 2) to find out whether the students' achievement in writing taught by using PBL is higher than those taught by using direct instruction for those who have higher communicative competence and for those who have lower communicative competence.
- 3) to find out whether there is significant interaction between teaching methods and communicative competence in teaching writing.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

Problem-based-learning and Direct instruction will be the scope of the study as part of teaching method. The communicative competence will be divided into two levels: high and low to the students' achievement of SMK MULTI KARYA Medan in writing. Writing experience, proofreading their own writing work and friends, writing message, writing formal and informal letter, and change interview or dialogue text into narration text will be the scope of writing skill of this study.

