

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Study

English is taught as a foreign language in Indonesia and its aim is to enable students to master the four English skills, i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Depdiknas, 2006:287). Writing is one of the four language skills in which someone can express his ideas, thoughts, and experiences through written language. Writing is considered the most difficult and complicated language skill to be learned compared to other language skills. Nunan (1989:35) states that learning to write fluently and expressively is the most difficult of four language skills for all students whether it is for first, second, or foreign language students. Furthermore, Nunan (1999:271) highlights that the most difficult thing to do in learning a foreign language is probably in producing a coherent, fluent, and extended piece of writing. In line with Nunan, Richards and Renandya (2002:303) state that writing is the most difficult skill for second language (L2) students to master. The difficulty lies not only in organizing and generating ideas, but also translating these ideas into readable texts. The skills involved in writing are highly complex. L2 students have to pay attention to higher level skills of planning and organizing as well as lower level skills of spelling, punctuation word choice and so on.

The Curriculum of Educational Stratified Level (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan: KTSP) of Senior High School states that students of senior high school are expected to be able to write various genres such as narrative, descriptive, and

expository writing (Depdiknas: 2006). It becomes the reason why the teaching of writing is important. Harmer (1998:79) states that some reasons for teaching writing to the students of English as a foreign language include reinforcement, language development, learning style, and writing as a basic language skill. In line with Harmer, Raimes (1987) in Widiati and Cahyono (2006:140) highlights that there are six purposes of teaching writing: writing for reinforcement, training, imitation, communication, fluency, and learning. Furthermore, Raimes (1983:3) highlights that teaching writing helps students learn to use language.

Considering the complexity and the importance of writing, an English teacher should be an effective teacher, who can draw students' talents and then use variety of teaching methods and strategies to improve their talents. The writing class should be facilitated with activities which motivate students to learn. Teaching writing is not just opening the book, giving assignment, and grading paper. The students are not just writing based on the topic given and collecting the product at the end of a lesson. The students should be challenged and stimulated by interesting and fun activities during the teaching and learning process. According to Brown (2001:340) one of the challenges of becoming an effective writing teacher must offer guidance in helping students to engage in the process of writing.

Narrative is one of genres which is taught in Senior High School level. It is the most common and popular type of writing among students. The writer writes narration to inform an event, story, incident, or his/her own experiences. When a

student writes about his school experiences, he writes a narrative, or when he tells the readers about his holiday, he also writes a narrative.

Many students of Madrasah Aliyah Taman Pendidikan Islam (MA TPI) find some difficulties in learning writing narrative. The difficulties affect the students' result of writing. A preliminary study which was conducted on August 13th 2014 showed that the students' average score in writing a narrative text was 49.6 (forty-nine point six) (see Appendix H) , while the minimum passing grade criteria (KKM/Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal) is 60.0 (Sixty point zero).

Table 1.1
The Mean of Achievement in Writing Narrative of the Students of
MA Swasta Taman Pendidikan Islam Medan

No	Academic Year	Students' Score		
		Class XI		
		Lowest Score	Highest Score	Average
1.	2011/2012	25	40	32.5
2.	2012/2013	30	45	37.5
3.	2013/2014	40	55	47.5

From Table 1.1 it is concluded that the students' achievements do not meet the minimum passing grade criteria (KKM/Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal) determined which is 60

The result indicates that the students' writing achievement is not satisfactory yet. They often made mistakes in grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and their paragraph organization and poor content as well. Besides, it was supported by the students' result of questionnaires distributed in the preliminary study that many of the students have a big problem in writing due to some reasons. First, they do not

know how to begin writing especially when they have no idea what to write. Second, they find it difficult to generate and translate the ideas into a readable text because of lack of vocabulary. Third, they feel bored in writing class because the learning activities in writing are monotonous. The teacher usually asks the students to rearrange some words into a good sentence. The students are also asked to write a simple paragraph using their own words without the teacher's assistance.

Based on the facts above, the difficulties of students and the unsatisfactory results in writing at MA TPI Medan might be due to the ineffective technique of teaching writing and this causes the teaching and learning activities to be unlively. In this case, firstly, the teacher does not make a good planning which includes general and specific instructional objectives, instructional material and media for teaching writing. Burden and Byrd (1999:137) state that the use of instructional media during instruction can facilitate and enhance student's learning. However, to help students to be able to write, a teacher should be more creative to find out the authentic material and appropriate media which help the students to engage in teaching writing.

Secondly, the teacher possibly assumes that writing is a product-oriented which focuses on the end result of learning process. The students are expected to be able to do as fluent and competent as user of the language does. Meanwhile, writing is not a single activity, but one which is recursive, it means that writing has several stages and these can be performed from the initial to the final stages, and can proceed through again, until the final product is presented. Nunan (1991:87) states that writing is a long and often painful process. Due to this situation, the teacher has to involve

the students with various classroom activities which are believed to promote the development of language skill.

Third is, potentially, the teacher dominates the classroom activities. The activities in the teaching and learning of writing are likely to be teacher-centered. Students rarely work cooperatively. They are often given difficult task individually that make them give up. The students actually prefer to be more frequently engage in cooperative learning. As a result, students find writing instruction dreary. These are the factors that cause the low level of students' motivation. However, the teacher has to transform the teaching and learning process to be student-centered to increase the students' motivation. Brown (2001:82) states that learner centered, cooperative teaching, helps the students to develop intrinsic motivation. In addition, Nunan (1991:87) states that collaborative group work among students is a way of enhancing motivation and developing positive attitudes toward writing.

Considering the problem in the teaching of writing at MA TPI Medan above, there is a need to implement an approach or method that can solve the problems. Accelerated learning (for further explanation the abbreviation A.L is used) is the most advanced teaching and learning method in use today. It's a total system for speeding and enhancing both the design process and the learning processes. Based on the latest brain research, it has proven again and again to increase learning effectiveness while saving time and money in the process. Many of today's leading organizations and educational institutions are benefiting from the power of accelerated learning. What

makes accelerated learning so effective is that it's based on the way the learners all naturally learn. A.L. unlocks much of their potential for learning that has been left largely untapped by most conventional learning methods. It does this by actively involving the whole person, using physical activity, creativity, music, images, color, and other methods designed to get people deeply involved in their own learning.

According to Meier (2000:XVII), here's what people need for an optimal learning environment: (1) **A positive learning environment.** People learn best in a positive physical, emotional, and social environment, one that is both relaxed and stimulating. A sense of wholeness, safety, interest, and enjoyment is essential for optimizing human learning. (2) **Total learner involvement.** People learn best when they are totally and actively involved and take full responsibility for their own learning. Learning is not a spectator sport but a participatory one. Knowledge is not something a learner passively absorbs, but something a learner actively creates. Thus A.L. tends to be more activity-based rather than materials-based or presentations-based. (3) **Collaboration among learners.** People generally learn best in an environment of collaboration. All good learning tends to be social. Whereas traditional learning emphasizes competition between isolated individuals, A.L. emphasizes collaboration between learners in a learning community. (4) **Variety that appeals to all learning styles.** People learn best when they have a rich variety of learning options that allows them to use all their senses and exercise their preferred learning style. Rather than thinking of a learning program as a one-dish meal, A.L.

thinks of it as a results-driven, learner-centered smorgasbord. **(5) Contextual learning.** People learn best in context. Facts and skills learned in isolation are hard to absorb and quick to evaporate. The best learning comes from doing the work itself in a continual process of "real-world" immersion, feedback, reflection, evaluation, and reimmersion.

In this case the researcher feels challenged to create an innovative method of teaching English material especially narrative text of writing material through accelerated learning approach due the researcher's teaching experiences in his school with the title "Improving Students' Ability In Writing Narrative Text Through Accelerated Learning Approach of Eleventh Grade Students at Madrasah Aliyah Taman Pendidikan Islam Medan.

1.2 The Problems of the Study

Referring to the background of the study, the research question is formulated as follow:

1. How can the accelerated learning approach improve the students' writing skills at MA TPI Medan?
2. How is the students' ability before implementing the accelerated learning ?
3. How is the students' ability after implementing the accelerated learning ?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

In line with the research problem, this study is intended (1) to improve the eleventh grade students' writing skills of MA TPI Medan in the academic year of 2014/2015, (2) to find out the students' ability before implementing the accelerated learning ?, (3) to find out the students' ability after implementing the accelerated learning

1.4 The Scope of the Study

There are many factors that can cause the low level of the students' writing ability. Those come from internal and external factors. The internal factors that can influence the students' writing ability are the students' motivation, The students' interest, IQ, students' learning style and etc. The external factors that can affect students' writing ability are environment, facility, teacher performance including the teaching method. In this case the researcher only limit on the accelerated learning.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

The findings of the study are expected to be useful theoretically and practically, this study is useful for (1) the English teacher to improve the students' writing ability (2) the students to increase their writing skill (3) the researchers who are interested to carry out a research in the similar focus.



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