CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the writer discusses the background of the research, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the research, the significance of the research, the scope of the research, and the operational definition.

1.1 Background of the Research

Reading, speaking, listening and writing are language skills that are important in English subjects. Writing as one of the language skills is challenging to learn. From writing, people allow to express what they want or feel that cannot be easily expressed in oral communication. Different from other skills, writing needs some practice to make a good writing ability. The skill in writing is crucial for success in college and advancing a career (Ranaut, 2018). Hence, students must have excellent capabilities to write well. Writing is a form of communication that allows people to express their ideas, opinions, and emotions. By writing, one can record and explain the past for the future. It means that it can save one's knowledge can be written on paper for years and ultimately contribute to other people and the author himself. In addition, it can improve the writer's communication skills. It expands one's mind and imagination. Therefore, the ability to write effectively is becoming increasingly important in a global society.

In Indonesia, writing becomes a requisite skill that should be developed from elementary school up to the university level (Ariyanti, 2016). Based on the curriculum, it is a sub-skill of English that must be mastered by the students. They should go through writing because it brings some aspects that are useful in the English learning process. Those aspects are grammar, punctuation, vocabulary, structure, and cohesive devices. This ability is the most challenging skill among the four skills (Abas & Abd Aziz, 2018). In product-focused teaching, English teachers generally pay less attention to other aspects such as the purpose and process of compiling the text itself. The results of teaching writing in schools have

not been satisfactory due to inadequate requirements for effective teaching and learning. Another problem that makes writing quite demanding for Indonesian students is that English is considered a foreign language. Therefore, it is not easy for Indonesians to learn English, which is connected to the "real world". In addition, many researchers state that writing is the most challenging skill for L2 learners. The difficulty lies in developing and constructing ideas, and also in turning concepts into understandable parts.

Based on initial observations at SMK Sultan Fattah Demak, there are some problems related to teaching writing. These problems can be categorized into five aspects. Namely materials, methods and techniques, media, teachers, and students. All aspects contribute to achieving learning. One of these factors is the media. Media is a vital component in the teaching and learning process. As we know that the teaching and learning process cannot run well without the media. Interesting media can help students find inspiration for their writing. The use of media is expected to support the teaching and learning process of writing English. However, the English teacher has not used the media effectively to support the teaching of writing. The media used by the teacher in learning to write is only in the form of original equipment such as blackboards, chalk, erasers, markers, chairs, and tables. There are no supporting tools that can encourage students to write. Therefore, we need interesting media to support the student learning process.

Today the use of learning media is often associated with multimedia, such as computers and the internet. Some schools have computer laboratories that can be used in the learning process. However, the utilization of this media is still not optimal. Internet connection available at school is rarely used in writing class. There are several supporting media in learning to write, but the teachers do not use these media because they cannot use them well. Meanwhile, the teaching style is more lectures, which is not interesting for students. They feel tired and uninspired in English, especially to write. Thus, students' motivation in writing English is low. Therefore, the learning media must be applied to overcome the problems at SMK Sultan Fattah Demak. The writer applied a web blog as an

interesting medium that was likely to improved students' writing skills. For this reason, web blogs can support students to investigate and create thoughts and substance for writing. Web blog offers several advantages (Hao & Gao, 2017; Hossain & Quinn, 2012). It is modest and straightforward to post materials, and ready to peruse all over the place. It is not difficult to track down in the search machine on the subject, creator, or the two. Web blogs likewise give a device that can be utilized to interface other's web. It makes it easier to join with another side of the world. Besides, web blog links to others have access to people everywhere.

Based on these above explanations and descriptions, the writer would like to find out more about how web blogs can improve writing skills for English subjects in class X SMK Sultan Fattah Demak, by conducting research entitled "Using Web Blogs to Improve Students' Writing Skill of The Tenth Graders of SMK Sultan Fattah Demak in Academic Year 2022/2023".

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of the research above, the following problem can be formulated follow as:

1. How web blogs improve students' writing skill of the tenth grade of SMK Sultan Fatah Demak in the academic year 2022/2023?

2. How do students and English teacher respond to the existence of web blog media in English class?

1.3 Objective of the Research

Based on the statement of the problem above, the objective of the research are:

1. To find out the improvement in students' writing skills using a web blog.

2. To find out the responses of students and English teacher after the existence of a web blog in English class.

1.4 Significance of the Research

By conducting this research, the writer hopes that the result will be useful as follow:

1. Theoretical Advantage

This research aims to provide insight to the first grade students of SMK Sultan Fattah Demak to improve their writing skills in learning English.

2. Practical Advantages

   a. For the researcher, the research can give practice in developing her knowledge and skill in using writing media.

   b. For English teachers at SMK Sultan Fattah Demak, this research can be used as a source of information to improve students' writing skills.

   c. For the principal of SMK Sultan Fattah Demak, this research will help him better understand the EFL learning process. Such understanding will encourage him to facilitate any efforts to improve the EFL learning process in the school.

   d. For SMK Sultan Fattah Demak students, the research will make them more interested and motivated to learn and to write English.

   e. For other researchers, the research can give a general knowledge of how to improve students' writing skills. The research also can be used as the foundation for the next research.

1.5 Scope of the Research

So that the scope of research leads to the objectives to be achieved, then from the background of the problem above, the scope of the research is made as follows:

1. The research subjects are tenth grade students of SMK Sultan Fattah Demak for the academic year 2022/2023.

2. The implementation of this research uses a web blog to improve the skills of writing descriptive texts in English subject for class X students of SMK Sultan Fattah Demak.

3. Descriptive text is a genre of text which contains explanations and descriptions of an object, from its shape, function, characteristics, etc.

1.6 Operational Definition

1. Web Blog

A blog is a web blog designed to publish information by an author. For some people, blogs are used for the benefit of the learning process, because of the ease of accessing information without having an account. In the research of Zdemir & Aydın (2015) blogs as online media can be used for the learning process through a process-based approach. So that students can improve their abilities including content, organization, discourse markers, vocabulary, sentence construction, and writing mechanisms.

2. Writing Skill

Scott (1990: 69) as cited in (Virdyna, 2016) defines Writing is an interesting activity, it can give students some advantages although basically there are difficulties in writing but it is still a useful, essential, integral, and enjoyable part of the foreign language lesson. Writing involves several components which have to be considered including word choice, use of appropriate grammar, syntax, mechanics, and organization of ideas into coherent and cohesive form (Gebhard, 1996 cited in Apsari, 2017). Because it lets students express their personalities even guided activities can include choices for the students, like copying the story about something.

3. Descriptive Text

According to Wardiman (2008), as cited in Language, Science, & Maumer (2018), descriptive text is a text that describes the features of something, a certain place, or someone. Description in writing is the activity of creating visual images and sensory impressions through words. It is usually written logically and in vivid detail.

Like other genres, the descriptive text has a structure or stages. The elements or schematic structures of descriptive text are called identification or general statement and description. Identification is intended to introduce and identify certain participants such as a person, a thing, a place, an animal, and or an event. Description, on the other side, is structured to describe that participant from its characteristics, appearances, personality, and habits or qualities (Butt, Fahey,

Feez, Spinks, & Yallop, 2000; Derewianka, 1990; Gerot & Wignel, 1994 ; Knapp & Watkins, 2005). Regarding its linguistics features, Derewianka (1990); Emilia and Christie (2013); Gerot and Wignell (1994); Knapp and Watkins (2005) state that descriptive text use several linguistics features, which are summarized below:

a. Focus on specific participants as the main character;

b. Use present tense as dominant tenses;

c. Use linking verbs or relational process frequently (is, are, has, have, belongs to) in order to classify and describe appearance or qualities and parts or functions of the participant);

d. Use action verbs or material process and behavioral process in giving additional description regarding action and behavior done by the participants in text;

e. Use mental verb or mental process when describing feelings;

f. Use adjectives and adverbs to add information to nouns (participant) and add information to verbs (actions) to provide more detailed description about the topic;

g. Use adverbial phrases to add more information about manner, place, or time and sometimes realized in embedded clause which functions as circumstances.

4. The tenth graders of SMK Sultan Fattah Demak

SMK Sultan Fattah is an educational institution that aims to develop students who work in the industrial world and are ready to continue their education to a higher level. SMK Sultan Fattah is certified A (Superior). Sultan Fattah Vocational School is part of the Sultan Fattah Demak Islamic Center Foundation. Sultan Fattah Vocational School is located at Diponegoro street No. 47-49 in Jogoloyo, Wonosalam, Demak.

Sultan Fattah Demak Vocational School has the Field of Education and Training covering Expertise Competencies:

a. Institutional accounting and finance

b. Visual communication design

c. Office management and business services

d. Multimedia

e. Automation and office governance

f. Automotive light vehicle engineering

The tenth graders of SMK Sultan Fattah Demak have four majors, namely automotive light vehicle engineering, accounting and institutional finance, office automation and governance, and multimedia.

The tenth grade students of SMK Sultan Fattah Demak in academic year 2022/2023 are those who are studying English subject of first grade in senior high school. In this research, the writer focused on X-MM (Multimedia).