CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This introduction presents and discusses the background of the study, the research problem, the objective of the study, hypothesis of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation of the study, and the definition of the key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Mastering English as a foreign language is increasingly important in globalization era. Due to the importance of mastering English, the Indonesian government considers English as one of foreign language to be taught in school from the elementary level up to the university level. The teaching and learning activities should be oriented toward the mastery of four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The teachers should always make every effort to engage the students in language activities using the language for communication. The objective of teaching English is to enable students to communicate in English orally and in a written form. Based on the 2006 School Based Curriculum, the objective of English teaching is to enable students to master the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

In addition, there is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for L2 learners to master. The difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these ideas into readable text. The skills involved in writing are
highly complex. L2 writers 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 difficulty becomes even more pronounced if their language proficiency is weak (Richards & Renandya, 2002: 303).

L2 writing is a complex process of discovery which involves brainstorming, multiple drafting, feedback practices, revision, and final editing. It is different from L1 writing, because L2 writers have more than one language at their disposal (Wang & Wen, 2002 in Jun, 2008:8).

According to Broughton et. al (2003: 116-117), there are four general problems usually faced by L2 learners in English writing; First Mechanical problems with the script of English. A great deal of the writing that occurs in the foreign language classroom is not primarily concerned so much with developing writing skills as with reinforcing the teaching of particular structures; Second, problems of accuracy of English grammar and lexis. The poor knowledge possessed by the students concerning the complicated rules of English especially if they are so different from their L1 grammar makes them difficult to compose correct and good sentences; Third, Problems of relating the style of writing to the demands of a particular situation. Some students feel so difficult determine whether they have to write by using narrative, recount, expository or others in expressing their ideas; The last, Problems of developing ease and comfort in expressing what needs to be said. This happens because the students lack of courage to do mistake in their writing.
The problems faced above are not solely caused by the inability of the students to write, but also by the inappropriate strategy implemented by the teacher in the teaching and learning process. These conditions also happened in SMK PGRI Pandaan. Based on the early observation conducted in January 2013, it shows that every time the students of that school are asked to make writing assignment, they feel reluctant to do that. Their results of writing English assignment are not as good as other English language skills. The results show that from the standard minimum of passing of the school, namely, 7.6, the average of the class only reached 5.0 in writing. Compared with the other three skills, it was still unsatisfactory; speaking has average score 6.6, reading 7.8, and listening, 7.7. This data was taken from the final score of the students from the last whole semester. From the early observation, the researcher concludes that one of the problems is caused by the using of a conventional technique of teaching. This condition triggers boredom of the students and they do not have any spirit to join the learning activity since it cannot increase the students’ motivation for learning. Therefore, the teachers as the facilitators should attempt to find the solution of the problem. They should change and develop their teaching strategy in writing, so satisfaction from teaching and learning activities can be obtained and students’ motivation can be increased.

Due to that condition, the researcher tries to find out a kind of technique that can help students write sentences or a simple paragraph and motivate them to actively participate in the writing activity. The researcher assumes that one of the good ways of teaching writing is by using instructional media. Instructional media are important
in teaching and learning processes since they can enhance and promote learning and support the teacher’s instruction.

There are many kinds of instructional media that can be used in the teaching and learning processes. One of them is picture. According to Raimes (1983) in Suryawan (2008: 5), pictures can be the basis for fairly mechanical controlled compositions, sentence combining exercises, or sequencing of sentences, writing of original dialogues, letters, reports, or essays.

Pictures as the instructional media are very useful for teaching English. One of the roles of media is to attract the students’ attention and to deliver information (Kasbollah, 1995). The use of pictures as a visual media in the teaching learning process is intended to make the teaching learning more effective and efficient so that the quality of learning outcomes can be improved. So, in teaching writing, the teacher can use picture series to motivate the students to write and to give information for students in controlled work, to help, to stimulate and to guide students to write a paragraph.

Related to the use of pictures in teaching and learning writing have been conducted by some other researchers. Rahmawati (2005), for example, conducted the development of picture series to improve elementary school students' interest in learning English. She concluded that the chalkboard is such kind of picture that attract the students’ interest in learning English; and the students gave good responses during the lesson. In line with Rahmawati, Zulfainah (2007) applied sequenced pictures on the writing narrative ability of the first year students at SMAN 2 Batu.
She found that picture series of her research on the teaching of narrative writing showed that the students achieve better performance in writing narration after being prompted with sequenced pictures than before. The present research is similar to Zulfainah’s research, that is, it relates to picture series to be applied in the teaching of narrative writing, but there is a little difference. This study is applied in teaching of procedure writing and this study takes SMK students as the object of the study.

SMK or vocational school for it is so different than general senior high. These differences do not mean to downgrade the quality of one of them, but there some characteristics of SMK which become points of benefits than SMA; First, SMK is prepared for those who wants to either continue his study to a higher level of education, university level, or seek a job, since in the SMK curriculum has more practical study than theoretical which aims to create graduators who are ready to compete in the job world. Second, since the orientation of the SMK curriculum is prepared for workers, so the learning activity is dominated in job field than in the class. The class is only used for giving the necessary materials for facing the job field. Therefore, all the materials given to the students are mostly related to jobs and of course English is not an exception, and that becomes the third benefit.

In this research, the researcher tries to implement the picture series media into the teaching of procedure paragraph. Procedure paragraph is designed to describe how something is achieved through a sequenced of actions or steps. It explain how people perform different processes in a sequenced of steps (Bachtiar B. & Cicik K., 2007: 34). To write a procedure paragraph, there are three important things should be
paid attention to. First, make sure that the steps in the process are complete. Following a procedure whose steps are incomplete will fail to produce the expected result. Second, present the steps in the right sequence. Finally, use correct transitional words to indicate the sequence of the process you are writing (Scarry S. & Scary J., 2011: 415). To make a good procedure paragraph, it would be better if the teachers use picture series to make the steps clear, and the students will arrange the sentences in a procedural order. The researcher believes that picture series is applicable for the students in of the second year at SMK PGRI Pandaan because it may guide, help and encourage students to express their ideas, opinions, and thoughts onto paper. Moreover, SMK students usually learn a lot of things about procedure of doing something such as procedure to build computer, to install software, to cook, etc.

Based on the unsatisfactory condition of the teaching and learning of writing skill and the consideration that pictures can be one of the useful instructional media in the teaching and learning process, this research is to be conducted in order to find a good way to improve the students’ writing skill. This research focuses on the improving of the teaching of procedure paragraph writing using picture series.
1.2 Statement of Problem

Does picture series as a media improve students writing skill of the second year at SMK PGRI Pandaan?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to know whether picture series as a media improves students writing skill of the second year at SMK PGRI Pandaan or not.

1.4 Hypothesis of the Study

- Null hypothesis (Ho) : Picture series does not improve students writing skill of the second year at SMK PGRI Pandaan.
- Alternative hypothesis (Hi) : Picture series improves students writing skill of the second year at SMK PGRI Pandaan.

1.5 Significance of the Study

1. For the students

The students are motivated to write as they get new ideas from the picture series given, therefore their vocabulary mastery will be improved as a result students’ English writing skill is improved.
2. For teachers

It can motivate teachers to find some new methods or media which are appropriate in teaching writing. It also encourages the teachers to develop their creativity to improve teaching learning process.

3. For future researcher

The researcher hopes this research can be used as a reference for other researchers who wants to conduct a similar research with different topic.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

There are two variables that will be investigated in this research. Those are dependent variable (students’ achievement of writing test after classroom activities) and the independent variable (the picture series teaching strategy of writing). This research is restricted to study the effectiveness of Picture series to improve students’ skill in writing procedure paragraph at SMK PGRI Pandaan.

1.7 Definition of the Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, the researcher presents definition of the key terms used in this study.

- **Writing** in this study refers to a process of putting ideas down on paper to transform thoughts into words to sharpen main ideas and to give them structure and coherent organization (Peha, 2003: 58)
- *Procedure/ process paragraph* is designed to describe how something is achieved through a sequenced of actions or steps. It explain how people perform different processes in a sequenced of steps (Bachtiar B. & Cicik K., 2007: 34).

- *Picture series* in this study refers to series of pictures in which each has certain stories that has strong correlation between one and another that is used as media of teaching (Raimes in Suryawan, 2008: 5).

- *Effectiveness* in this study refers to the degree to which objectives are achieved and the extent to which targeted problems are solved (Microsoft ® Encarta ® 2008. © 1993-2007 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved).