CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the understanding theory used in the study concerning with the writing and action research. To be more specific, this review covers discussion: the nature of writing, the importance of writing, the correlation between letters and writing, parts of letters, type of letters, and review of previous studies.

A. The Nature of Writing

Writing is defined as a task which involves students to make grammatically correct sentences by manipulating words in the form of a piece of continuous writing which successfully communicates the writer's ideas on certain topic¹¹. These statement shows that the main purpose of writing is to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings clearly in written language and must be understood by others and those do not make confused. The other experts who told about this are Hogue and Oshima. They say that as someone write an assignment, keep in mind the audience, tone, and purpose so that the message the reader will receive is the message intended to convey¹². The communication in the written form will

J. B Heaton. Writing English Language Tests. (London: Longman group Limited, 1975), P. 138
Ann Hogue and Alice Oshima. Introduction to Academic Writing. (New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1988), P. 2-3

succeed if the reader can understand what they write without any help to explain it.

Writing skill is very complex. It includes many things that are used as criteria. A good deal of attention was placed on 'model' composition that students would emulate and how well a student's final product measured up against a list of criteria that includes content, language use, and vocabulary. In line with the statement, Heaton explained that writing requires many devices such as grammatical skill, stylistic skill, mechanical skill and judgment skill¹³.

Writers construct meaning as they build language structures to convey their thoughts and ideas in written form¹⁴. Writing skill can be defined as a skill of communicating ideas through written symbols by organizing the ideas based on the rules of language system to convey meaning. Cantoni and Harvey state that the writing process consists of decoding a verbal message into graphic symbols that can be decoded by the reader¹⁵. It can be said that writing is a process of creating, organizing, writing, and polishing. In the first step of the process, they create ideas. In the second step, they organize the ideas. In the third step, they write a rough draft. In final step, they polish their rough draft by editing it and making revisions. Relating to this statement, Fellag said:

"...a series of writing process activities include:

¹³ J. B Heaton. Writing English Language Tests. (London: Longman group Limited, 1975), P. 138

¹⁴ John F Savage. Teaching Reading and Writing: Combining Skills, Strategies and Literature. (USA: Mc. Graw-Hill Companies, 1998), P. 345

¹⁵ Gina Cantoni and Harvey. Content Area Language Instruction Approach and Strategies. (California: Addison Wesley Publisher Company, 1987), P. 81

- 1. Getting ideas by brainstorming, clustering, listing and free writing.
- Organizing ideas into a paragraph with a topic sentence, different type of support, a conclusion, and other elements of paragraph development.
- 3. Writing a first draft.
- 4. Revising for content and development (independently and with pairs).
- 5. Editing are to improve language (using an editing checklist)¹⁶.

The steps above are done in order to avoid the mistakes that happen in transferring the message. Betta and Sardinas explain that the use of related word form helps the writer move smoothly from one idea to the next. Then, they add that writer should be able to keep the reader's focus on the main idea without repeating the exact words again and again¹⁷. The writer, hence, is expected to be able to arrange, organize his/her sentences clearly, coherently and perfectly, then, he/she should carefully rewrite and revise it until what he/she has written become possible, understandable, and meaningful, so that the writer's message are easily understood by readers. So, whatever is written

¹⁷ Laurie Betta and Carolyn Du Paquier Sardinas. Northstar: Focus on Reading and Writing Intermediate. (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1998), P. 212

¹⁶ Linda Robinson Fellag. Writing Ahead I: Skills for Academic Success. (New York: Pearson Education Inc, 2002)

should be aimed at the reader, that person or persons whom expected to read the composition.

1. Content

The content of written includes the writer's idea, the point of information, the organization and sequence, and the formal signals. The writers express their knowledge and idea on their composition so that the reader can get it easily and clearly. To write a good content's form the writers have to be able to make the main ideas of their letter before they write it. Moreover they have to be able to grow and arrange them in a good chronological order by using the generic structure of the letter they want. Whereas, the reader understands what the writers want easily. And its supported by the Competence Based Curriculum was to construct a good writing product the students have to arrange their idea based on the generic structure.

2. Language Use

Lado defines grammar as the patterns of form and arrangement including intonation, stress and, structure¹⁸. Grammar also discusses about the language work where it includes two main sections of morphology and

¹⁸ Robert Lado. Language teaching a scientific approach. (Bombay-New Delhi: Tata Mc Graw-Hill Publishing Co. Ltd)

syntax. Morphology is a study of changes in form of words and the meaning of these. Syntax is the study the other of words and the meaningful discourse, and relationship between words others and meaning. This knowledge of morphology (using morphemes to change the meaning or grammars of a word) and syntax (the order that words can be arranged in) is essential to successful communication whether in writing or in speech.

Moreover, competence in language use in determined not only by the ability to use language with grammatical accuracy, but also the use language appropriate to particular content Hung Iseng¹⁹. It means, the students have to be able construct such words to be a good word's formation and sentence's structure. For many years grammars have told us about the written language so that, for example, we confidently state that a sentence needs at least a subject and a verb, which can then be followed by an object, by a complement or by an adverbial. Thus, grammar includes the study of word classes or parts of speech such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, variety of sentence structure such as tense and words other of function words such as pronoun, auxiliary, preposition and also articles.

¹⁹ Gina Cantoni and Harvey. Content Area Language Instruction Approach and Strategies. (California: Addison Wesley Publisher Company, 1987), P. 81

3. Vocabulary

The words of a second language are not translation from the words of the first language. Even when they are borrowed from it, they develop differences in meaning, distribution, and form, which are characteristics of their language. Lado states that to clarify further the ides of the vocabulary of a second language, three levels are distinguished for the reader: (1) vocabulary to operate the patterns and illustrate the pronunciation of the language, (2) vocabulary for communication in areas of wide currency, and (3) esthetic and technical vocabulary²⁰. The number of new words used by them on their writing product can be used as measurement for the students' capability in vocabulary and the students understand of the content of their letters it self. The components of the vocabulary include idioms and appropriate register.

B. The Importance of Writing

Writing might be called as a recreational aspect of writing²¹. It can be said that writing can give both emotional and aesthetic pleasure. Cantoni and Harvey also stated that good writing should not only be effective but also aesthetically

²⁰ Yueh Hung Iseng. A Lesson in Culture. ELT Journal Volume 56/1 January 2002. (England: Oxford University Press, 2002)

²¹ Fred D White. The Writing's Art A Practical Rhetoric and Handbook 3rd ed. (California: Wars worth Published Company, 1986), P. 21

sounds²². In other words, writing is a way to express someone's feelings, though; there is no denying that writing is often considered as the hardest skill to be acquired for many people. They want to express their feelings, thoughts and experiences, but they get difficulties finding out precise words to reveal their feelings.

So, writing is very important ability to be conducted in the teaching learning process. Writing generally, is an activity (productive or reproductive) to express ideas, experiences, and imagination in the written form²³. Writing is also a basic skill that is necessary to increase their opportunities for career promotion. Fowler, for business purpose, pointed out that the written word is increasing demand in the business world both as a key to get job and success in it²⁴. Writing skill can be used in writing proposal, application letters, etc.

Moreover, people need to have good writing skill. Sumarsiningsih asserted that the importance of writing could be seen not only from its role and process but also from its function and significant contribution to the development of human's life and civilization²⁵. Hill said that the reason why they learn a language is to be able to use it to communicate with others (they should remember that communication is a two-way process. It has a creative side-

²² Gina Cantoni and Harvey. Content Area Language Instruction Approach and Strategies. (California: Addison Wesley Publisher Company, 1987), P. 81

²³ Moch Khoiri. Jurnal Pendidikan edisi Januari No. 1/XXIII/2000: Materi Berbahasa Inggris Untuk Sisiwa Sekolah Menengah. (Surabaya: Unesa University Press, 2000), P. 18

²⁴ Mary Elizabeth Fowler. Teaching Language Composition and Literature. (New York: Mc. Graw-Hall, Inc, 1965), P. 40

Dwi Ariyanti. Improving Students' Writing Ability Through Question Based Summarizing Technique. (S-1 Unpublished Thesis: UNESA, 1999), P. 14

speaking and writing; and receptive side-listening and reading)²⁶. So, as a means of communication, writing has an important part of human life. The writing ability will make their communication easier.

C. The Correlation between Letters and Writing

A letter is a means of communication in written form that has an important part in human daily life. So, it must be written in the right ways. And the letters is one of the media of the communication in the writing. Because of that, they have accuracy of the correlation. Writing letters is a conventional model of communication and hence every educated person, irrespective of his/her profession should know how to write a clear and readable letter²⁷; it means not only content but form as well. Some people call letters as an art that have some aspects and parts. Betta and Sardinas state the information about each part of a letter:

²⁶ L. A. Hill. Selected Articles on the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language. (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), P. 116

²⁷ A. N Jha and Sachin Singhal. High School English Grammar and Composition. (New Delhi: Rohan Book Company, 2002), P. 281

1. Part of Letters

a. The Date

In the United Stated, the date written in this order: month, day, and year. And it may alternatively go on the left. The date may be written in any of the following formats:

October 18th, 2003

18th October 2003

18th October 2003

The date may also be written entirely in figures:

12-10-2003

12.10.2003

12/10/2003

All figure dates are interpreted differently in British and American English. For example, 12.10.2003 means 12th October 2003 to British people. To an American it means 10th December 2003. Americans put the month before the day.

b. The Participant's Address/Address

The participant's address is the address of the reader. This is used in business letters and personal letter. The participant's address written in this order: the position of someone, name of Company and, residence.

Example:

The manager

Messrs Brown, Smith and Co. Ltd.

163, George Lane

Mumbai – 1

But, the address of personal letter is there residence of the writer. There are consists of street and city. It is usually written after the date or under the date of the letter.

Example:

112 Southgate Street

N.Y.

c. The Salutation

Salutation or greeting, this part opens the letter. The form of greeting depends upon the relationship between the writer and the reader of the letter. It usually begins with "Dear..." And in the personal letter,

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puts comma in behind of the greeting or salutation. It may alternatively go

on the left. It may be written in any of the following formats:

Example: Dear Mother, Dear Aunt Louise and Uncle Alex, Dear David,

Dear Alexander,

d. The Body

This is the main part of the letters. The body is very important in

the process of letter. It includes one or more paragraphs. The good letter

should be containing in several elements, such as: introduction,

development, and conclusion.

e. The Closing

This is the expression we use to finish the letter, before signing the

name. There are many type of the close which can choose as the close in

the letter of friendship or formal letter. Every expression has little

different meaning. The term depends upon the relation of the person

addressed. Use one of the type's expressions, which is suitable or relevant.

The close usually follow of the comma in behind of the expression. It may

be written in any of the following formats:

Example:

Sincerely,

Your son/daughter/niece/nephew/etc,

Sincerely yours, Affectionately,

Yours, Fondly,

Yours truly, Warmly,

Your friend, With love,

Letters of friendship can close with such expression as²⁸:

Yours lovingly,

Yours affectionately,

Devotedly yours,

Ever yours,

Etc.

Formal expressions of the close are:

Yours sincerely,

Yours truly,

Respectfully yours,

f. The Signature

If the letter is typed, this is always written by hand, in ink. In formal letters, the person's name, title, and company are typed below the signature²⁹. The signature can be used as identity of person. It usually puts

Theodore Waters Joseph Devlin. How to speak and Write Correctly-Letter writing. (http://www.sepo.net/books/english-grammar/letter-writing)

²⁹ Laurie Betta and Carolyn Du Paquier Sardinas. Northstar: Focus on Reading and Writing Intermediate. (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1993), P. 40

at the end of the letter, after the expression of closing. It can't put any symbol after written signature.

Letters can be used for giving information, in private or business. No matter which type of letters they may write, it depends on the reason of each letter. Slamet and Sutono explain that there are some reasons someone write a letter, they are, to give many information, convey the same meaning that appropriate to the writer's mean, make faster their communication with others, and save the time, fee and energy³⁰.

According the explanation above, writing letters need to be taught in the school. Kern explains that writing letters either to native speakers or to other languages learners is an excellent way to introduce students to writing³¹. Letters have ordinary purpose and functions of writing that have to be known and learned by the students. For this case Kern also says:

"Letter writing corresponds well to the goals of communicative language teaching because it provides an authentic purpose for writing. It entails the use of a wide range of functions (for example, greeting, asking question, explaining, clarifying, apologizing, expressing agreement and disagreement), it integrates reading and writing, and it motivates learners to pay attention to form (because they are addressing a 'real' audience).

31 Richard Kern. Literacy and Language Teaching. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), P. 192

³⁰ Slamet and Syahban Sutono. Surat Menyurat: Kelompok Bisnis dan Manajemen, Jilid I. (Surakarta: Seti-Aji, 2002), P. 18

Depending on the content of the exchange, letter writing can also support cultural enrichment³². "

Moreover, letters can be used to communicate with others in the world. It will be existed although our world has developed.

D. Type of Letters

Singhal and Jha said that in general, letters are roughly divided into two kinds, they are³³:

1. Informal letters (Private or friendly)

This is also knows as a personal or private letter written to family members or close friends. The example of a private letter is a letter to a friend, apologizing for the failure to attend a party:

20, Pandora Road

New Delhi-110001

April 18, 2002

My dear Sachin

I am well and hope that you will be enjoying good health. On 5th of April I received your invitation card to attend the dinner party at your home. I am very sorry that I could not attend the party. But when you know what it was that prevented me. I hope you will understand and excuse me.

Richard Kern. Literacy and Language Teaching. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), P. 192
A. N Jha and Sachin Singhal. High School English Grammar and Composition. (New Delhi: Rohan Book Company, 2002), P. 281-285

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As you know, my grandfather has been suffering from some serious

ailments for the last 10 years. In the first week of this month, his condition

further deteriorated and he was finally taken to a private nursing home where

I sat the whole night by his bedside. I am glad to say that he is little better

now.

So now you see why I could not come. I hope my absence at the party

did not upset your arrangements.

Love,

Amit

2. Formal letters (Business, etc).

The term 'business letter' is intended to include all kinds of letter not

belonging to the class already discussed. A business letter may be between

any two organizations or between as individual and an organization.

As business letter is written between professional. The language

should be clear, decent, polite and always to the point. The example of

business letter is from an individual to an organization:

13, Kashmiri Gate

New Delhi – 110006

October 15, 2002

The manager

Messrs Brown, Smith and Co. Ltd.

163, George Lane

Mumbai – 1

Dear Sir

I shall be obliged if you send me 100 piece of white Muslim as advertised in your sale catalogue (no.1531) by passenger train as soon as possible.

The railway receipt may be sent to me through the State Bank of India.

Yours Faithfully

K.L. Kataria

E. Review of the Previous Study

There are several studies dealing with the use of letters in teaching English language. The first study is "Using Pictures of Situation to Teach Writing Descriptive Texts to the Eight Grade Students of Junior High School", by Alisia Yunita Rahmawati. The research questions are: (1) how is the implementation of situational pictures in teaching writing descriptive text? (2) how is the student's descriptive writing after being taught by using pictures of situation? She uses descriptive qualitative research in order to describe the implementation of

situational pictures in teaching writing descriptive texts. And to know the student's descriptive writing after being taught by using pictures of situation. She also describe the improvement occurred when pictures of situation is used in descriptive texts. By doing the study, it can be concluded that the students' writing skill can be increased if they are given the opportunity to written text as an alternative way to learn writing³⁴.

The second study is written by Hidayatullah, entitle "Using Smallville Film Series to Activate Students to Write Narrative Text". The research question are: (1) how is the smallville applied to activate students to write narrative text, (2) to what extents can the smallville film series helping the students' narrative writing. He also uses descriptive qualitative research. It also can be found that the use of Smallville film series can activate the students to write narrative text.

The third study is "The Use of BBC's Wildlife Documentary Video to Improve the Descriptive Writing Ability of the Second Year Students of SMP Negeri 1 Tuban", written by Oktabety Kusjayanti. The research question are: (1). How was the BBC's wildlife documentary video applied in teaching descriptive writing to the second year students of SMP Negeri 1 Tuban?, (2) How was the students' writing improvement when BBC's wildlife documentary video is used in teaching descriptive writing?, (3) What were the students' responses toward the use of BBC's wildlife documentary video in teaching descriptive writing?. He

³⁴ Yunita Alisia Rahmawati. Using Pictures of Situation to Teach Writing Descriptive Texts to the Eight Grade Students of Junior High School. (THESIS: UNESA, 2008), P. 8

also uses descriptive qualitative research. It also can be found that the use of BBC's wildlife documentary video can improve the writing ability of the second year students of SMP Negeri 1 Tuban.

From the previous studies above, it can be seen that the use of video picture and visual aid give a positives effect toward the students' language skill especially in writing skill of Junior High School. Therefore, with this in mind, the researcher would like to conduct a further research. She uses the letters as a teaching material to improve students' writing skill. Thus, the researcher considered this research as the continuing study of the previous ones.