

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

This research is meant to reveal students learning opportunities as presented on the English learning materials used by Politeknik LP3I Jakarta Kampus Depok. Discussing about learning materials means discussing about task and text as one of the principles of materials design that material should be authentic in terms of text and task (Tomlinson, 1999; Penaflorida, 1995; Nunan, 1988). Brown (1995, p.139) stated that technique and tasks of any systematic description to be given in teaching and learning are considered as materials. Moreover, Tomlinson (2011) said that activities in which the learners are asked to use the target language in order to achieve particular outcome within a particular context can be called as task.

One of the methodological principles based on the SLA theory is, use tasks, not texts, as the unit of analysis (Harwood, 2010, p.69). Learning materials should provide the learners with opportunities to use the target language to achieve communication purposes (Tomlinson, 2007, p.21). According to Sun (2010, p.889) learning materials attract students' interests in language learning. Moreover, he stated that a learner preferred text which relevant to the learner background and an up-to-date

article from newspaper enhanced students' enthusiasm. Since learning materials could encourage students to take more responsibilities in their own learning (Rosenberg, 2009), enhance reading and provide a variety of activities for encouraging language acquisition and use (Collins, 2009). Furthermore, Nunan (2001, p.94) stated that teachers have to accept that learner have a right to have their views incorporated into the selection of content and learning experiences, and need to provide learners with the appropriate opportunities for them to make choices. Therefore, for this reason this study is focused on the learning opportunities

An understanding of the quality of learning opportunities is central to the process of learning (Crabbe, 2003, p.9). Whereas Kumaravadivelu (cited in Crabbe, 2003) stated that it is customary to distinguish teaching acts from learning acts, to view teaching as an activity that creates learning opportunities and learning as an activity that utilizes those opportunities. Brundiers (2010, p.312) defined real-world learning opportunities as a way to help students in increasing their understanding of sustainability problems (knowledge), and complement their methodological competence in applying problem-solving approaches (strategic competence cluster). According to Dewi (2013) teachers should provide relevant materials in order to fulfill the students' needs.

There are many learning opportunities that can be explored. One of the learning opportunities is through stories because it is fun (Mixon & Temu, 2006, p.14). They stated that stories can be used for 4 (four) skills

of activities such as speaking, reading, listening and writing. Furthermore, it also can be used in combining skills for enhancing critical thinking and creativity (p.16). Another learning opportunity that can be done is through a project work. Chlopek (2008, p.17) stated that project work doesn't only allow students to learn autonomous way but also develop students' language skills, problem-solving skills, creativity, imagination, research skills, and teamwork skills. A better way to get learners hypothesizing, concluding and challenging has to be through games (Ting, 2009). However, In order to learn and teach more effectively, blended learning is also can be used to give learners and teachers a potential environment (Marsh, 2012, p.3).

English Business Correspondence, as one of the subjects given for the third semester in Politeknik LP3I Jakarta Kampus Depok has syllabus and textbook which can be used as the guidance to support the teaching and learning process. Penny Ur (2012, p.198) stated that textbook can be a guidance and support for inexperienced teachers. Moreover, he stated that course book might be used as a syllabus, and the objective of the language course will be fulfilled if it is followed systematically.

Politeknik LP3I Jakarta Kampus Depok is an institution which has a link and match with the motto wanted to have the students ready to face the work world. Students are expected to have a job before they graduated from the institution. Therefore, specific needs are required to accomplish the goal. One of subject given to achieve the goal is by giving

English Business Correspondence subject for *Administrasi Perkantoran* major.

English Business Correspondence is part of English for Specific Business Purposes in which the course given focused on business knowledge with the situation of language learning. It also becomes one of the important subjects given to *Administrasi Perkantoran* major which is given on the third semester. Based on the report made by the Cooperate and Placement Department on March 2014, there are 61% of *Administrasi Perkantoran* study program of the third year students have a job as an administration staff in several different offices. One of the job descriptions of admin staff is writing and sending letters to persons working both in-house and out of the company. However, the letters made are not only inquiry letter, offering letter, order letter, complaint and adjustment letter, and collection letter that they have learned on the English Business Correspondence subject, but also to be able to make cover letter, agreement letter, and announcement letter. For some students who work as HRD (Human Resource Department) staff they should be able to write letters like acceptance letters, approval letters, shipping letters and many more. Therefore, working student needs more advance skills and knowledge in Business Correspondence.

Based on the objective, students are expected to be able to write business correspondence from English Business Correspondence subject. Materials have become the ideas of aims, values and methods in teaching

and learning (Hutchinson, 1987, p.37). Teaching materials, course descriptions and curriculum guidelines represent the goal of communicative competence (Savignon, 2002). One of the main sources in teaching and learning process is a textbook (Mahmood, 2009). Therefore, a textbook is given to every student to help them in learning the subject further.

Textbooks are expected to be easier and more enjoyable (Cunningsworth, 1995). Teaching materials should be interesting and meaningful (Rodgers, 2003, p.7). According to Richard (2001, p.257) there is no commercial textbook that will ever be perfect fit to the language program. Therefore, English Business Correspondence subject doesn't use commercial textbook but the textbook which composed by a lecture who teach this subject.

There are many learning opportunities can be offered in teaching and learning activities. One of the principle of language acquisition proposed by Tomlinson (in Harwood, 2010, p.94) is that learners need opportunities to use language to try to achieve communicative purposes. Therefore, it is necessary to represent the learning opportunities in English Business Correspondence Textbook as stated Kumaravidivelu (cited in Alemi and Daftarifard, 2010, p.766) that Teachers should create learning opportunities and make necessary changes.

## **B. Focus and Sub-focus of the Study**

The focus of this study will be the textbook used in English Business Correspondence subject and the learning opportunities as the sub focus. So, this study will explore the learning opportunities represented in English Business Correspondence textbook. The learning target on the syllabus will be investigated so that the learning opportunities can be explored to be represented in English Business Correspondence textbook as stated by Gedler (2009, p.156) that the new learning should not be limited to only the situations introduced in the core events of instruction. Furthermore, he said that the final phases of learning include opportunities to apply the learning in new situations and to construct additional cues for later recall

## **C. Research Questions**

The research questions proposed in this study are:

1. What English learning opportunities are represented in the English Business Correspondence textbook?
2. What learning targets are expected in English Business Correspondence syllabus?
3. To what extent do the learning opportunities represented in the English Business Correspondence fulfill the learning targets stated in the syllabus?

#### **D. Significance of the Study**

As the teaching material, English Business Correspondence textbook is expected to help not only the teacher but also the students, as the source of information. It can be the guidance and support for the teachers (Ur, 2012, p.198). Brundiers (2010, p.310) stated that real-world learning opportunities contribute to the acquisition of key competencies in sustainability. Some benefits can be taken from the findings of this study. Theoretically, knowing the learning opportunities represented in the English Business Correspondence textbook and developing the learning opportunities in order to encourage students to take more responsibilities in their own learning and to support a better teaching and learning process which links to the work world and reach the goals of the institution in practice.