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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Writing is one of the language skills that is crucial in learning English. Students have to master writing skill because of writing is an important role in English as Second Language (ESL) or English as Foreign Language (EFL) learning. Walsh (2010) in Klimova stated writing is important skill to be studied by students, because it is used in education and in the workplace. Writing can be facilitated for everyone to communicate and inform the information to others. It can be a tool for everyone to communication the information between reader and writer. By mastering the English writing, students are allowed to communicate with people from all over the world. In brief, understanding and mastering the writing skill is needed by students.

Writing is a difficult skill to be mastered. Saddler et al (as cited in Westwood, 2008) stated writing is a skill that needs mental task, it means that a writer does not only have ideas or purpose in writing, but also it needs knowledge to write. This statement informs that writing is difficult skill to do. The difficulties in writing happened because of students are not used to write. Writing takes practices, students need to know interrelated components that are needed. It is supported by Sturm and Koppenhaver (as cited in Westwood, 2008.) stated that there are many of multiple components including the topic or theme, choice of words, organization,

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purpose, audience, clarity, sequence, cohesion and transcription to write. These components are needed to write a successful writing.

In school, students are taught about English writing. It needs lot competences to be mastered. One of the competences is grammar. Hymes (as cited in Canale et al, 1980) stated that grammatical competence is one of the four important competencies (grammatical, sociolinguistics, discourse, and strategic competences) in English. Furthermore, Brown (1994) defined that grammar is system of rules governing the conventional arrangement and relationship of word in sentence. It means that students need to know how to put words together to write meaningful sentences. Students have mastered grammar that helps them to deliver their messages in understandable way.

Grammar is the important component which is required to be mastered by students. Based on the syllabus of the tenth grade students, materials in studying grammar are pronoun, tenses, adjective, verb, article, noun and adverb. Those materials are needed to supported students understanding in speaking and writing. Furthermore, the standard competences of writing English are students' capability in communication into three kinds of paragraph, they are interaction, transactional, and functional paragraph. It means that students are able to communication by doing interaction transaction, and functional in written form. On the syllabus of tenth grade students of SMAN 2 Tapung, there are many kinds

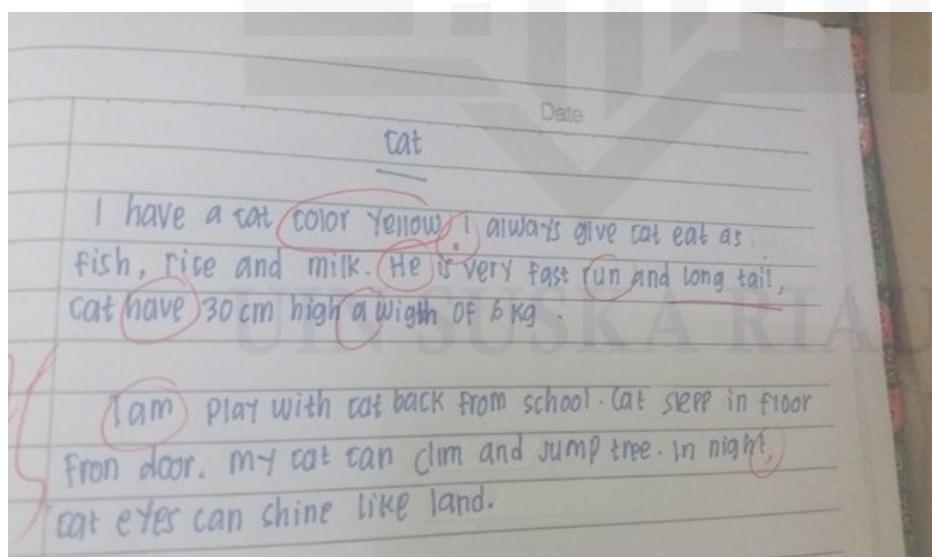
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of functional paragraph, those writings consist of several modes. One of which is a descriptive paragraph.

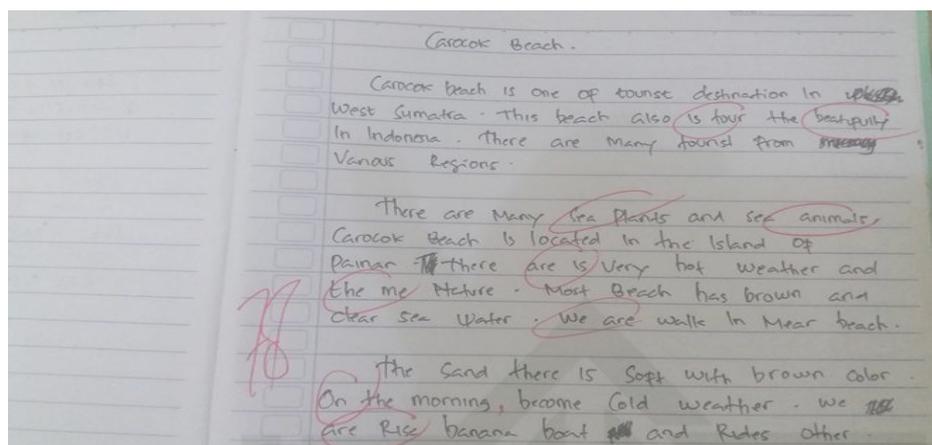
Based on the researcher's preliminary interview and observation done on February, 27th 2018 with Mr. Suryadi S.Pd as one of the English teacher who teach tenth grade students in SMAN 2 Tapung. In teaching and learning process of writing English, the teacher always explained the purpose, generic structure, and language features in descriptive paragraph. He also gave various examples of descriptive paragraph that expected to help students understanding. From the explanation of the English teacher, the students have been taught English maximally, and ideally students were able to write a piece of descriptive paragraph correctly. But the students still write incorrectly descriptive paragraph.

The followings are examples of students descriptive writing paragraph at tenth grade students of SMAN 2 Tapung:



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From the students' descriptive writing paragraph above, it is shown that students were still facing problems or difficulties in writing English grammatically, deriving vocabulary correctly, and employing mechanic in writing. Based on the preliminary interview and observation, the researcher found some problems, it can be seen in the following phenomena:

1. Some of students were still facing problem in using grammatical order in writing descriptive paragraph.
2. Some of students made mistakes in writing nominal and verbal sentences.
3. Some of students were not able to write descriptive paragraph based on generic structure.
4. Some of students were not able to write a good paragraph based on mechanic in writing English such as spelling punctuation, and capitalization.

Based on the problem above, the researcher was interested in investigating the problems above into a research entitled: **THE**

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CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' GRAMMAR MASTERY AND THEIR WRITING ABILITY ON DESCRIPTIVE PARAGRAPH AT THE TENTH GRADE STUDENTS OF SMAN 2 TAPUNG.

B. Definition of the Term

1. Correlation

According to Creswell (2012) correlation is statistical test to determine the tendency or pattern for two or more variables or two sets of data to vary consistently. It can be said that, correlation is the statistical relationship between two variables in a research. The variables are independent and dependent. Independent is a variable that influence the dependent variable. In this research, correlation refers to correlate two variables, they are the students' grammar mastery and their writing ability on descriptive paragraph at the tenth grade students of SMAN 2 Tapung.

2. Grammar Mastery

Grammar is the rules that show how words are combined, arranged, or changed to show certain kinds of meaning (Fromkin and Rodman, 1983). It means that grammar is a set of rules that explain how words that you use in understandable way. Mastery is a condition of having comprehension and knowledge in a particular subject or activity (Oxford). The comprehension and knowledge that you have will expedite the condition or activity which is done. In this research, Grammar mastery

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is students' knowledge and comprehension about using grammatical features of descriptive paragraph.

3. Writing Ability

Writing ability is the ability of students to express the ideas of feelings, or something in minds to others by using written language. Theoretically, writing is a productive skill to express the ideas and feelings by using written language. By writing various English paragraphs in school, students will have ability in writing. This remains the most effective way to demonstrate your understanding of your subject and your ability to use what you know (Nigel, 2006).

4. Descriptive Paragraph

According to Gerot and Wignell (1995) descriptive paragraph is a kind of paragraph with a purpose to give information. The information that writer write is to persuade the reader to see something from the writer's point view. The reader may read the information that writer write in descriptive paragraph, the information is like illustration of thing, place and person. The context of this kind of paragraph is the description of particular thing, animal, person, or others. Hammond (1992) stated that the generic structure of descriptive paragraph consist of identification and description. Identification is to identify phenomena, it is the introduction thing that writer wants to described. Description is to describe part, qualities, characteristics, etc. In description the reader may picture the idea that writer write.

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C. Research Problem

1. Identification of the Problem

Based on the background of the problem of the phenomena that researcher shows above, it's seemed that most of the students are still getting problems in learning English especially in writing. Thus, the problems of the research are identified by the questions as follows:

- a. Why were students difficult to comprehend grammatical order in writing descriptive paragraph at the tenth grade students of SMAN 2 Tapung?
- b. Why were students uncorrectable in writing sentences at the tenth grade students of SMAN 2 Tapung?
- c. Why students were unable to write based on the generic structure of descriptive paragraph at the tenth grade students of SMAN 2 Tapung?
- d. Why were students unable to write a good paragraph based on mechanic in writing English such as spelling, punctuation, and capitalization at the tenth grade students of SMAN 2 Tapung?

2. Limitation of the Problem

Based on identification of the problem, the researcher focuses the research only on the students' grammar mastery and their writing ability on descriptive paragraph at tenth grade students of SMAN 2 Tapung. The researcher limits grammar mastery here only for the grammar features of descriptive paragraph. The grammar features simple present tense,

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adjective, noun phrase, action verb, verb of being, verb of having and adverb. These grammar features were regarded to be the main components of descriptive paragraph that was studied. If they were wrongly applied, the meaning of sentence will be ambiguous.

3. Formulation of the Problem.

Based on the limitation of the problem stated above, thus, the problem of this research can be stated in the following research question:

- a. How is students' grammar mastery at the tenth grade of SMAN 2 Tapung?
- b. How is students' writing ability on descriptive paragraph at the tenth grade of SMAN 2 Tapung?
- c. Is there any significant correlation between the grammar mastery and writing ability on descriptive paragraph at the tenth grade students of SMAN 2 Tapung?

D. The Objective and Significance of the Research

a. Objective of the Research

- 1) To find out the students' grammar mastery at the tenth grade of SMAN 2 Tapung.
- 2) To find out the students' writing ability on descriptive paragraph at the tenth grade of SMAN 2 Tapung.
- 3) To find out the significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and their writing ability on descriptive paragraph at the tenth grade of SMAN 2 Tapung.

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b. Significance of the Research.

- 1) Hopefully this research finding is able to benefit the writer as a novice researcher in learning how to conduct a research.
- 2) The research findings are also expected useful and valuable especially for students and teachers of English of the tenth grade students at SMAN 2 Tapung to be consideration in their teaching and learning English in the future.
- 3) Besides, these research findings are also expected to be positive information, especially for those who are concerned in field of teaching and learning English as a foreign language or second language.
- 4) Finally, these research findings are also expected to be the practical and theoretical information to the development of the theories on English language teaching.

E. The Reason for Choosing the Tittle

The reason why the researcher chooses the title in conducting the research on the topic “the correlation between students’ grammar mastery and their writing ability on descriptive paragraph at SMAN 2 Tapung” are based on some considerations:

1. The researcher wants to know the correlation between students’ grammar mastery and their writing ability.

2. The problem of the research is very interesting to be investigated in term of teaching and learning process. The teacher of English is required build the students' grammar knowledge.
3. The topic is relevant to the researcher as one of the students of English education department.
4. As far as the researcher is concerned, this research title has never be conducted by any researchers.

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