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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

I.1. Background of the Problem

English is a foreign language that must be learned either as Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) or as Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) because it is an important language for communication of International relationship. The trend for teaching English as a foreign language has been changed from the usage oriented to the use one, in which learners do not learn much about language rules anymore, but they learn to use it in real situations.

In Indonesia, English gives very meaningful contributions to the development, especially in tourism, business, science and technology. Therefore, our government has determined English to be taught in all levels of education in our country starting from elementary school to university.

At Elementary school, English is taught as a local content from year 1 to year four, and at year 4 up to the year 6, it is taught as a compulsory subject. In junior and senior high school, English is taught as a compulsory subject within four classes-hours a week. The main goal of teaching English is to master four language skills and language components like vocabulary and grammar. (Depdiknas: 2005).

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As stated above that English comes into the education system in Indonesia, so that English is taught in schools in Indonesia. One of the most important things in learning English in the school of Indonesia is academic achievement. Academic achievement is defined as “academic performance includes both curricular and co-curricular performance of the students. It indicates the learning outcome of the students.

In other sides, academic achievement may be defined as excellence in all academic disciplines, in class as well as co- curricular activities. Another definition stated by Brown et al (1989); Academic achievement is the final rating of the students determined by the teacher through a point system, expressed by a letter grade. To reach good academic achievement is not easy. Many the students face some struggles, especially in the learning process, so that some the students do not get a good outcome at the end of the study.

Harmer (2007: 265) states as “... we use language in terms of four skills- reading, writing, speaking and listening. These are divided into two types. *Receptive skills* a term used for reading and listening, skills where meaning is extracted from the discourse. *Productive skills* is the term for speaking and writing, skills where students actually have to produce language themselves.”

Furthermore, Richards and Renandya (2002: 30) state that “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 texts.” Brown (2004: 218) states as follows “We also fully understand the difficulty of learning to write “well” in any language, even in

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our own native language. Every educated child in developed countries learns the rudiments of writing in his or her native language, but very few learn to express themselves clearly with logical, well-developed organization that accomplishes an intended purpose.” According to the basic competence in the junior high school curriculum, in learning writing, students are expected to write some texts for example letters, short messages, greeting cards, monologs such as descriptive, recount, narrative, procedure and report texts.

Then, Seow (2002: 316) states as follows: “Process Writing as a classroom activity incorporates the four basic writing stages – planning, drafting (writing), revising (redrafting), and editing – and three other stages externally imposed on students by the teacher, namely responding (sharing), evaluating and post-writing. Teachers often plan appropriate classroom activities that support the learning of specific writing skills at every stage.”

In addition, Nunan (1991: 88) states that the learners’ purpose for writing, which transcends is producing text from teacher. However, the students’ concerns and interests are acknowledged that can be developed rapidly through writing skill in which it can be practiced by forming words to be coherent sentences in a paragraph.

Jane (1983:30), she states that in writing, “sentence structures and patterns must be carefully formulated, word choices more precise, and ideas organized in a manner readily coherent to the reader.” writing is also about expressing ideas in which students communicate their feeling and emotions in written forms. Nation (2009:94) states that “most writing should be done with the aim of communicating

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a message to the reader and the writer should have a reader in mind when writing.”

In short, the school Based Curriculum involves the teacher in teaching and learning process just for a facilitator that might guide the students in achieving the competency. In School Based Curriculum, there are two competences namely standard competence and basic competence which needs to be mastered by students, and these competences are stated in syllabus as a guide for teachers in arranging teaching and learning design or lesson plan.

In junior high school, the standard competence is to understand the meaning short essay of various genres. Based on the curriculum and syllabus (2015/2016), the students are required to be able to comprehend many kinds of genres, such as: descriptive, narrative, recount, etc, which are useful for communication purpose, related to their environment (Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan, 2006:31).

Junior High School 01 Kuantan Mudik is one of the schools that also uses School Based Curriculum (KTSP) as it was a guidance on teaching and learning process. English is one of compulsory subjects that must be taught to students. It was taught twice a week with a duration of 80 minutes (2 x 40) minutes in one meeting. Although this school had done a lot of efforts to improve the students' English competence in reading subject. But in fact, the students do not seem good in English and many students still have difficulties in writing. Meanwhile, this school had a program to improve English, which the teacher has been using the

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competence Based Curriculum in teaching and learning process, but the techniques that teacher used were not successful enough in teaching writing yet.

According to the writer's preliminary research to the second year students at SMPN 01 Kuantan Mudik, this school has done a lot of efforts to increase students' competency of writing in English teaching based on the syllabus of grade VIII was based on the capability of the students in expressing the meaning in monolog text, essay, and even paragraph used written form accurately, fluently, and contextually in the form of paragraph such as report, narrative, spoof, analytical exposition, hortatory exposition, and descriptive. According to the one of the English teachers of SMPN 01 Kuantan Mudik, she said that most of the students still got difficulties in expressing their ideas and gave the argument when they write, especially in writing a paragraph.

Based on the observation, the teacher at the second year of SMPN 01 Kuantan Mudik, taught English based on the curriculum and syllabus. In teaching writing, the teacher had applied various strategies, but the students still get difficulties to achieve the learning objective. They just got low achievement who was achieved the students writing skill. In this case the teacher was using the Four Square strategy and Defends strategy to help the students' writing ability. It was compared those strategies in teaching writing.

Ideally, the students of SMPN 01 Kuantan Mudik, should be able to write descriptive paragraphs and be able to organize ideas in written form. But, in reality, the students' writing ability was still insufficient and far from the curriculum expectations. Their writing skill was still out of the minimal standard

score. These cases could be seen from the some symptoms that the students are not able to develop their ideas in writing descriptive paragraph. The students still cannot express their ideas well. Then, the students were still confused to choose appropriate vocabulary in writing the descriptive paragraph. Because of many students were lacking vocabularies so they have difficulty to use it well. Besides, the students were not able to develop their ideas into coherent paragraphs in a descriptive paragraph. Then, the students were still confused how to give the arguments for their thesis in making descriptive paragraph.

Based on the symptoms above, it can be inferred that the students still have difficulties in writing descriptive paragraphs. It was because they feel that writing was a hard job and the teaching technique or strategy is bored. The learning process was carried out by the teacher, which is presented almost without media support. Therefore, the students are difficulties to enhance their ability in writing subject particularly writing descriptive paragraphs.

In order to improve students' ability in writing descriptive paragraph, there was a strategy that would help them to do the writing activity. Two particular Strategies namely Four Square and DEFENDS strategies are both strategies to solve these problems. Four Square Writing Method (FSWM) is a method developed by Judith S. Gould and Evan Jay Gould in 1999. It is a method of teaching basic writing skills that are applicable across grade levels and curriculum areas. It can be used to teach writing for students in grade 1-12. FSWM can be applied for the narrative, descriptive, expository and persuasive forms of writing. Wikipedia defines FSWM as a simplified graphic organizer for teaching.

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Writing in school (2009: 1). Brokop and Persal (2010:20) state that “DEFENDS strategy is one of mnemonics strategy that may help the students organize their thoughts as they compose text.” Therefore, it is one of the teacher’s strategy guides that can be a very useful teaching strategy for an effective learning process in writing, especially in starting to write sentences.

Therefore, the students should be able to explore their ideas and exactly posit the supporting ideas during their writing process. In other word, the teacher was used two strategies, those are Four Square and DEFENDS strategies. By using these strategies they seemed that where was the most interested and influenced by the students in writing skill.

Based on these problems, it will assume that language learning strategies give significant influence toward the students’ English writing skill. So it was necessary to conduct a research entitled “**A Comparative study on The Effect of Using Four Square And Defends Strategies On Students’ Writing skill At SMPN 01 Kuantan Mudik,**”.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The problems deal with students writing skill in the teaching - learning process, especially teaching learning of writing descriptive text. The problems might come from students and teachers. However, those problems are needed to solve immediately. The students are not able to develop their ideas in writing descriptive paragraph. The students are still confused to choose appropriate vocabulary in writing the descriptive paragraph.

In other words, the phenomena also affect students at the SMPN 01 Kuantan Mudik,, some questions need to be addressed. How is students' skill in writing descriptive paragraph? Why are the students not able to develop their ideas in writing descriptive paragraph? Why are the students still confused about the position of the genetic structure in writing descriptive paragraph? Why are the students not able to use correct grammatical order in writing descriptive paragraph? How is the influence of writing strategy to their writing skill by analyzing Four Square and DEFENDS strategies? Is the teaching strategy appropriate in improving the students' ability in writing? Which strategy gives better result either Four Square and DEFENDS strategies on writing skill?

Robert and Verterman (1987: 131) state that writing is one of the four language skills, which is very important to be mastered by students. Writing is a powerful learning tool. It can be used to convey our ideas, message, feeling, and the others. Writing skill through learning, practicing will encourage students to move beyond formulaic organization and to develop their own sense of organization and style of work with the various forms and consider their audience. The students engage the process of writing by exploring ideas, reconsidering strategies, revising their work and become more aware of their own composing processes. The Four Square Writing Method is able to solve the difficulties in students' writing ability. Four Square Writing Method is well used in the discussion group so that students are able to produce a sentence to be a paragraph (Tijani:2013). It is also appropriate to solve the problem of having no idea of what to write because these methods coach one another when a partner has difficulty.

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The Four Square Writing Method seems able to facilitate students to reduce their inability to write. Four Square Writing Method also can manage to provide an implementation with the ability to write at the level of education is still low (Dewi:2013). The steps are (1) Categorizing; (2) Brainstorming three ideas with a summary sentence; (3) Placing a thesis statement in the center of the four-square; (4) Writing three ideas;(5)Adding more details; (6)Writing a wrap-up Sentence; and (7) Adding transition words. Through these steps, the students will be guided to use specific instructions to write and organize their ideas before finally writing the draft (Gould: 1999).

The “DEFENDS” strategy is a strategy that guides students throughout the writing process, beginning with the planning stage and progressing through organizing ideas. Ellis (1993:19) states that in writing subject the students conduct prewriting activities related to establishing a precise point of view and then brainstorm and list reasons why they have taken this position (main ideas).The strategy provides mnemonic structure that helps students generate and organize ideas and even exact ideas in good position.Then, a mind mapping strategy lets students rapidly produce an almost infinite number of ideas, and at the same time organize them by placing each idea next to what it is related to. Tony (1993:1) states that this makes a very powerful tool for creative writing or report writing, where it is very important to get down all students' ideas first. It is a trivial matter to read the mind map and write a sentence or paragraph on each 'key word'. **Therefore, these strategies can support the students' learning, especially in the writing process in order they can produce good writing productions.**

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1.3. Limitation of the Problem

Based on background and the statement of the problems about students' writing skill above, the study was focused on the effect of using FOUR SQUARE and DEFENDS Strategies on writing skill at SMPN 01 Kuantan Mudik,. The scope of the study was limited as follows:

For the research subject, two classes were chosen as samples of the research at SMPN 01 Kuantan Mudik,. They were divided into an experimental group 1 and experimental group 2 of the eighth at SMPN 01 Kuantan Mudik,. The classes chosen based on the English teacher's information that two classes should be homogenous and taught by the same English teacher.

1.4. Purpose and Objectives the Study

The purpose of this research was to investigate the effects between FOUR SQUARE and DEFENDS Strategies which were used in teaching and learning process and how to improve writing skill of the eighth students at SMPN 01 Kuantan Mudik,. In learning English these problems were arose so that more teachers are trying to find out what the barriers are and how to anticipate them. Based on the research questions formulas, the objectives of the research are stated as follows:

1. To find out a significant difference of students' writing skill before being given the treatment by using Four Square strategy for an experimental group 1 and Defends strategy for experimental group 2.

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2. To find out a significant difference of students' writing skill before and after being given the treatment by using Four Square strategy for experimental group 1.
3. To find out a significant difference of students' writing skill before and after being given the treatment by using Defends strategy for experimental group 2.
4. To find out a significant difference of students' writing skill after being given the treatment by using Four Square strategy for an experimental group 1 and Defends strategy for experiment group 2.

1.5 Research Questions

The problems of this research can be formulated in these following questions:

1. Is there any significant difference of students' writing skill before being given the treatment by using Four Square strategy the experimental group 1 and Defends strategy to the experimental group 2?
2. Is there any significant difference of students' writing skill before and after being given the treatment by using Four Square strategy to the experimental group 1?
3. Is there any significant difference of students' writing skill before and after being given the treatment by using Defends strategy to the experimental group 2?

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4. Is there any significant difference of students' writing skill after being given the treatment by using Four Square strategy to the experimental group 1 and Defends strategy to the experimental group 2?

1.6. Significance of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of using both strategies in teaching English to students, especially for students writing skill. It was expected that Four Square and Defends strategies was generated research future. Those strategies help the students to create writing descriptive paragraph by using their own words.

And then, for the teachers this study was hoped to help the English teachers at SMPN 01 Kuantan Mudik, as the designer in teaching learning process so that the English teachers were able to developed their strategies or technique or methods in teaching or learning process and create their creativity in writing descriptive text. As the student's concerns, it was hoped this study was enlarged their skill, to increase their achievement in writing skill, and also to encourage them to be more creative in producing their ideas.

1.7. The Rationale of the Research

This research was conducted to compare between Four Square and DEFENDS strategies on students' writing skill at SMPN 01 Kuantan Mudik,. Further, the students need good vocabulary and grammar in writing activity to

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fulfill the meaning of communication in writing. It means the writing involves the thinking process.

Many teachers had problem in teaching writing, because their strategies in teaching and learning process are monotonous. Some options are needed by the teacher to teach writing. By using an appropriate strategy in teaching and learning process, especially in writing skill is very important to enhance the students' capability to achieve certain the learning objectives. Learning strategies help to make language learning easier, faster, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations (Rubin 1987 and Oxford 1990). Language Learning Strategies refer to conscious or unconscious mental steps, procedures, techniques or specific actions employed by learners to aid in the acquisition, storage, retrieval and the use of information to regulate one's efforts in learning a target language.

In addition I.S.P Nation (2009:113) states that writing is an activity that can usefully be prepared for by work in the other skills of listening, speaking and reading. This preparation can make it possible for words that have been used receptively to come into productive use. Besides, writing is one of the skills that can improve the students' language and stimulate the students' cognitive which is useful for students who learn a language.

However, it is a hard work and hopes that the strategy was useful not only for teachers, but also for students in the teaching and learning process. The significant product was used for one way for a teacher in the teaching process. Four Square and DEFENDS strategies were given significant effect in order to improve the students' writing skill.

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1.8. Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpreting in writing this research, it is necessary to explain the definition of terms as follows:

1. Gould (1999) stated that the Four-Square strategy is purposefully designed and scheduled to be used during the start of the school day so that the students have maximum opportunities to continue, develop and support their proficiencies with these skills and knowledge throughout their day.
2. Decide-Estimate-Figure-Express-Note-Drive Search (defends) Strategy, “DEFENDS” strategy is one of the writing strategies that provide some steps from each mnemonic in order that the users of it can write a good paragraph by showing some arguments. Barbara and Mather (2009:157) state that the “DEFENDS” mnemonic provides the steps for writing a good opinion paper. It means that “DEFENDS” strategy will help the students to write a good paragraph by providing some steps in its process.
3. Writing skill based on Harmer (2007) found that writing unify thoughts in a structured sentence which can ease the readers to understand what the writer meant to say in their passage.
4. Descriptive text is a text, which says what a person or a thing is like. Its purpose is to describe and reveal a particular person, place, or thing. Descriptive text stretches out much information about certain people, things, and place clearly detail.