

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. The Background of the Problem

English is an international language and it is one of the foreign languages for us as Indonesian students. English language is used as an international communication such as technology, politics, security and bussiness. English is not only learned by people in the country who use it as their second language, but it is also learned by Indonesian students as the foreign language. English has been learned by Indonesian students from the beginning level, intermediate, and advanced.

In teaching English, writing is a basic language skill just as important as speaking, listening and reading. According to Jeremy Harmer, one of the reasons for teaching writing to students of English as a foreign language include writing as a skill. It does mean that writing cannot be produced without having skills on writing it self. In processing of a writing, Students need to know the components of writing, such as content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics. Furthermore, the students need to understand how to develop their writing in order that they know how to write letters, to put written reports together, to reply to advertisements, to write using electronic media<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremy Harmer. *How to Teach English*. (Pearson Education, 1998), p. 79

As in a fact, there are many ways to improve the ability of students in writing. One of them is learning descriptive text. Descriptive writing appeals to the senses. It tells how something looks, feels, smells, sounds. Descriptive means that giving a picture in words, describing something (describe a particular person, place or thing), especially without expressing feelings or judging.

Learning English especially in writing is not an easy work. Writing is an activity that requires a lot efforts of yours. Instead of that, Many students are able to say what they want to write but have difficulty in putting it into written form. That is they have problems in translating their ideas into text. Some of students can do this but are very slow. That is they lack fluency in turning ideas to text<sup>2</sup>. All of the problems make students not reachable to make a good writing product.

SMK Telkom Pekanbaru is a formal education that provides English subject to all students, especially writing skill. This school is using School Based Curriculum (*KTSP*) in teaching and learning English. At SMK Telkom Pekanbaru, English is taught twice a week in duration is about 45 minutes. Based on *KTSP*, writing is one of the skills in English Subject that must be taught and learned in vocational senior high school. Based on the syllabus of SMK Telkom Pekanbaru at the first grade, the basic competence of writing English is that describing things, people, types/character, time, day, month, and year accurately<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> I.S.P. Nation, *Teaching ESL/EFL Reading and Writing*, (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 119

<sup>3</sup> Direktorat Pembinaan SMK, silabus *Mata Pelajaran Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan Bahasa Inggris*. (Pekanbaru: Unpublished, 2011), p. 4

SMK Telkom Pekanbaru has characteristics of passing score (*KKM*) of 60. Based on the preliminary observation done by the writer at the first grade students of SMK Telkom Pekanbaru, this school had done a lot of efforts to increase the ability of students in English especially in writing. The teacher had done any strategies such as, lecturing method, simple picture technique, dictation method, etc.

In fact, students still had problems in writing especially descriptive writing. Students could not describe things, people, types/character, time, day, month, and year accurately. They only got score 40. It did mean that their ability in writing were still far from the expectation of curriculum. The problems can be seen in the following symptoms:

1. Some of the students were not able to arrange sentences.
2. Some of the students were not able to use correct grammar.
3. Some of the students were lack of vocabulary mastery.
4. Some of the students were not able to express ideas coherently.
5. Some of the students were not able to begin writing what they wanted to write.

Pertaining to the problems that are faced by the students in writing, actually there is a strategy to solve the problems that is called Tree Diagram Technique. Tree diagram technique is an appropriate strategy to solve the problem faced by students in learning English especially in writing descriptive text.

Based on the symptoms of the problems described above, the writer is interested in investigating these problems by composing a research entitled: **“The Effect of Using Tree Diagram Technique towards Writing Ability in Descriptive Text of the First Grade Students at SMK Telkom Pekanbaru”**.

## **B. The Definition of the Term**

The definition of the term is necessary to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation of this research.

### 1. Tree Diagram

According to Nation, Tree diagram technique helps students gather and organise ideas into relationships<sup>4</sup>. Tree diagram technique is one of the strategies that is used in teaching descriptive writing. It can help students to organise ideas because the components of the Tree Diagram are well-connected and well-arranged<sup>5</sup>. In this research, tree diagram is a technique used by the writer as a solution to solve students' problem in writing descriptive text of the first grade at SMK Telkom Pekanbaru.

### 2. Technique

Technique is a way of doing something especially one that needs special skills<sup>6</sup>. Technique is the different methods make use of different kinds of

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<sup>4</sup> I.S.P. Nation, *Op.Cit.*, p. 117

<sup>5</sup> Chien-Ching Lee, *Seeing is Understanding: Improving Coherence in Students' Writing*. (Singapore: Nanyang Technological University, 2012)

<sup>6</sup> Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 443

classroom activity<sup>7</sup>. In this research, technique means the step that were used by the writer to apply the tree diagram technique of the first grade students at SMK Telkom Pekanbaru.

### 3. Writing Ability

Sokolik in David Nunan stated that writing is a combination of process and product. The process refers to the act of gathering ideas and working with them until they are presented in a manner that is polished and comprehensible to readers. The concept that writing is a process is very useful to young writers<sup>8</sup>. Writing ability means the potentially capacity or the power of the students to present their opinion or to show up their idea in writing activity.

### 4. Descriptive Text

Descriptive writing appeals to the senses. It tells how something looks, feels, smells, sounds. Descriptive means giving a picture in words, describing something (describe a particular person, place or thing), especially without expressing feelings or judging<sup>9</sup>. Descriptive text is a text which lists the characteristics of something. Imagine the subject what you had described in their mind clearly as you see it in yours.

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<sup>7</sup> Jack c. Richards, et al. *Longman Dictionary Of Language Teaching And Applied Linguistics*, (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2002), p. 20

<sup>8</sup> David Nunan, *Practical English Language Teaching: Young Learners*. (New york: Mc.Graw-Hill Company, 2005), p. 98

<sup>9</sup> Sudarwati, and Eudia Grace. *Look Ahead (An English Course for Senior High School Students year XII)*, (jakarta: Erlangga, 2007), p. 131

### **C. The Problems**

Based on the background of the problems, the problems in this research are identified, limited, and formulated below:

#### **1. The Identification of the Problem**

- a) Is there any possibility to overcome the students' difficulties in sentence arrangement?
- b) What makes the students not able to use correct grammar?
- c) What factors make the students lack of English vocabulary mastery?
- d) What makes the students not able to express ideas coherently?
- e) What makes students unable to write what they wanted to write?

#### **2. The Limitation of the Problem**

Based on the identification of the problem, there are many problems found in this research. The researcher limits the difficulties of students in sentence arrangement, the students are not able to express ideas coherently, using tree diagram technique towards writing ability of the first grade students at SMK Telkom Pekanbaru, and the text used by the writer is descriptive text.

#### **3. The Formulation of the Problem**

- a. How is the students' ability in writing descriptive text taught by using Tree Diagram Technique of the first grade students at SMK Telkom Pekanbaru?

- b. How is students' ability in writing descriptive text taught without using Tree Diagram technique of the first grade students at SMK Telkom Pekanbaru?
- c. Is there any significant effect of the students' writing ability in descriptive text taught by using Tree Diagram technique of the first grade students at SMK Telkom Pekanbaru?

#### **D. The Objectives of the Research**

Generally, the objective of the research is to find out the answer of the problems and state the purpose clearly. The objectives of the research are:

1. To find out how the students' ability in writing descriptive text taught by using Tree Diagram technique of the first grade students at SMK Telkom Pekanbaru.
2. To find out how the students' ability in writing descriptive text taught without using Tree Diagram technique of the first grade students at SMK Telkom Pekanbaru.
3. To find out the significant effect of the students' writing ability in descriptive text taught by using Tree Diagram Technique towards ability in writing descriptive text of the first grade students at SMK Telkom Pekanbaru.

**E. The Significance of the Research**

1. To find out the significant effect of the students' ability in writing descriptive text by using Tree Diagram Technique.
2. To enlarge the researcher's viewpoints on English language teaching and learning process mainly at vocational senior high school Telkom Pekanbaru.
3. To complete the writer's task in fulfilling the writer's requirement for undergraduate degree in English Education Department of Education and Teacher Training Faculty of UIN SUSKA Riau