

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

One of the objectives of teaching and learning English at senior High School in Indonesia as stated in the 2004 curriculum guidelines is to allow learners to use English as a means of communication. In addition, it is also stated in the curriculum that English is the first foreign language that has to be mastered by the students especially for the skill of writing which includes the ability to write a text.

Writing is one of the productive skills in English. It means that through writing, learners including the students of SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar can create composition which may express their ideas and arguments, by doing the activities of writing, the students of SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar can also practice their background of grammar and vocabulary to produce their writing. In writing, therefore the students will not only drill themselves to use the language elements but also they have to know about the topic what want they write ababout and develop it.

In writing, the students must commonly think of the ideas coming out the topic given; however, they have difficulties in generating ideas. Good writing should

be the goal of every student because the ability to write well organized and concise paragraph is essential to a students success in almost all university courses.¹

Writing is the most difficult skill for the learners to master. The difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these ideas into readable text. The skills involved in writing are highly complex. The difficulty becomes more pronounced if their language proficiency is weak.²In order to generate and organize ideas well before writing, students must be able to start and concentrate on the quality task of their work. Depending on the topic of the task, students may also present their perspective and think creatively to come up new ideas. For example, students may need to decide what to write about, develop a topic, produce original thought, elaborate on ideas, use prior knowledge, think critically, and apply and learn new concepts.

The difficulties and the obstacles in writing also were faced by the students of SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar. Meanwhile, this school had some programs to develop English proficiency such as studying English Grammar and giving vocabularies once a week, practicing writing English conducted twice a week. The teacher always brought the students to some places (out of the class) to support them in English subject especialy in writing.

¹M.syafi'i, et. Al., *The Effective Paragraph Developments: The Process of Writing for Classroom Setting*, Pekanbaru, 2007, p. 1.

²Jack Richard and Renandya, *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*, USA: Cambridge University Press, 2002,p. 243.

Based on the syllabus of SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar, the first semester of the second grade, the students required to write descriptive text.³ The standards competence of writing English refers to capability of students in describing something else given by the teacher especially in describing about people to be a text. But in reality, they still had problem in writing, they were unable to express their idea to write a paragraph although English was taught three times a week for five hours in this school. The score (*kkm*) of English in this school is 70.

SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar is one of the senior high schools in which English becomes a compulsory lesson. It is also a favorite school in this town because the location is so strategic. English is taught four times a week in this school.. Even though the students have been studying English for three years at junior high school and two years in senior high school, but most of the students do not write well.

As matter of fact, the writer found that the students of SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar had problem in writing. On the other hand, the students of SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar tended to construct ungrammatical sentence in expressing their idea. For this, a number of them got difficulties in organizing their ideas or in putting their thought into writing. They also got trouble to create the connection between in idea with another one. Besides, they were lake of vocabulary, so they were hard to make a text.

³DepartemenPendidikan Nasional, *Silabus Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris*,2010, p. 5.

To encounter the barriers above , teachers can implement clustering technique to arouse students' interest in writing.⁴ For clustering itself, it is a way to help the students in searching for as many as ideas possible going to be generated and developed in writing particularly in descriptive text.

Clustering is an invention strategy that can be used to generate ideas for a text or to plan a text.⁵ There are two types of clusters. First, the discovering cluster is that students find out a text topic and find out what they know about the topic. Second, the planning cluster is that students plan a text and produce supporting ideas. It means that planning clustering can be used to plan a text as students find and organize some subtopics. They may discard several of them before settling on one. In this way, clustering can be used to narrow and focus the scope of a paper topic.

Based on the writer's preliminary study of the problems of the second year students of SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar, the writer finds out some phenomena as follows:

1. Students cannot write their essay based on the generic structure in writing English.
2. Students cannot use good grammar in writing.
3. Students have lack of vocabulary in writing descriptive text.
4. Students cannot use coherence and cohesion to make sentence correctly.

⁴Audrey and Telma, *Writing Step by Step In Structured Creativity*, Washington D.C: Prentice Hall Regent Englewood Cliffs, 1981, p. 1.

⁵Rico Gabriel, *Writing the Natural Way*, Los Angeles: University of Nebraka, p. 15.

The problems above can be caused by the difficulties in writing itself as an external factor. It can also happen because the students are accustomed to requiring long time to think of the issues given because they do not have enough information including arranging the sentences that will be written. So, to solve the problem needs a suitable strategy to improve students' writing ability.

In this case, the writer gives a solution by using clustering technique to help students get ideas and discuss their ideas one another to improve writing skill. Therefore, the writer is interested in pointing out the problem into a research entitled **“The Effect of Using Clustering Technique toward Students' Ability in Writing Descriptive Text of the Second Year Students at SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar Regency”**.

B. Definition of the Terms

1. Effect

Effect is change that something or somebody causes in something or somebody else, or result⁶. The writer concludes that effect can be said as influence that is appeared by something towards something else. However, in this research, the term of effect refers to the effect of using clustering technique toward students' writing ability in descriptive text of the second year students at SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar.

⁶A.S Hornby, **Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English, Seventh Edition**, New York: Prentice Hall, 1991, p. 422.

2. Technique

Technique refers to procedures used in learning, thinking, and so on, which serve as a way of reaching a goal. In language learning, learning strategies and communication strategies are conscious or unconscious processes in which language learners make.⁷

3. Clustering

According to Instructional Strategies Online on June 14, 2011, clustering is diagram used to represent words, ideas, tasks or another items linked to and arranged around a central key word or idea. Clustering is used to generate, visualize, structure, and classify ideas. It is a learning strategy developed by Gabriel Rico. This strategy is used by the writer to find out the effect of clustering technique on students' writing ability in descriptive text.

4. Writing ability

Writing in this research is defined as students' ability in using English in their writing practice. Therefore, the writer uses clustering technique to know its effect on students' writing ability.

C. Problems of The Research

Based on the background and symptoms explained above, it is clear that most of the students of SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar still face various problems in learning English, especially in writing. They get worried when the teacher asks them

⁷Longman, *Longman Active Dictionary*, London: Pearson Education, 2006, p. 515.

to write. Thus, sometimes it causes some students dislike writing in learning English. Because of this problem, the teacher of English is required to look for and use many creative strategies and techniques to make the students interested in writing, so that they can enjoy their learning.

1. Identification of the Problem

Based on the background and the problems explained above, it is clear that most of the students of SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar still face various problems in learning English, especially in writing. The problems in the research will be identified as follows:

- a. Why are the students not able to write their essay based on the generic structure in writing English?
- b. Why are the students not able to use good grammar in writing?
- c. Why are the students lack of vocabulary in writing descriptive text?
- d. Why are the students not able to use coherence and cohesion to write sentences correctly?
- e. How is the effect of clustering technique toward students' ability in writing?

2. The Limitation of the Problem

Based on the identification of the problems stated above, thus the problems of this research are focused on (a) students' writing English ability (b) the effect of

clustering technique toward students' ability in writing descriptive text of the second year students at SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar.

3. Formulation of the Problem

Based on the limitation of the problems, thus the problems of this research are formulated in the following research questions:

- a. How is students' ability in writing descriptive text before being taught by using clustering technique of the second year students at SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar?
- b. How is students' ability in writing descriptive text after being taught by using clustering technique of the second year students at SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar?
- c. Is there any significant effect of using clustering technique towards students' ability in writing descriptive text of the second year students at SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar?

D. Objectives and Significance of the Research

1. The Objective of the Reserch

This research is necessarily carried out in order to achieve the objectives as follows:

1. To get information about the students' ability in writing descriptive text before using clustering technique of the second year students at SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar.
2. To get information about the students' ability in writing descriptive text after using clustering technique of the second year students at SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar.
3. To find out whether there is significant effect of using clustering technique toward students' ability in writing descriptive text of the second year students at SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar.

2. The Significance of the Research

Theoretically, these research findings are expected to support the existence of the theories regarding the second or foreign language learning, teaching, and acquisition. Practically, these research findings are expected to give the positive contribution and information to the researcher herself as in conducting and increasing her knowledge, especially in the field of educational research of English language teaching and learning research. Besides, these research findings are also expected to provide the students and the teachers of SMAN 1 Perhentian Raja Kampar, especially with the information of their students' writing ability. Finally, these research findings are also expected to provide the readers or those who are concerned to the process of language teaching and learning with the information of both theories and practices.

