

## **CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Background of the Study**

In learning English, writing is one the basic language skills that should be mastered by students. According to Meyers (2005:75) writing is similar to producing speech. Through writing, everybody is not only able to express feeling and ideas, but also to communicate with other. In learning writing, students are taught how to transform their ideas and messages into written form that is composing a paragraph or a text.

Paul (2003:96) says that writing is generally as the most difficult of the four skills, especially in generating and organizing ideas which is completed by the mastery of the aspects of writing such as grammar, spelling, word choice, punctuation, and so on. The students need to think what they will write down and they should be able to use the correct grammar in order to make the reader(s) understand well. Professional writers often say that, “hard writing is easy reading.” In other words, writing is not easy. They should be able to write effectively because they perform their writing skill throughout their life for academic and occupational purposes.

Based on *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan* (2006), teaching English to Junior High School is expected to raise functional level. The students should be able to communicate both oral and written form in a daily life, understand and produce the text in functional level. Therefore, teaching writing to junior high school students is more focus on producing functional text rather than monologue

text. Functional text refers to a short text that provides information and directions to help a reader. Short functional text is a transcription that meant to help the reader to accomplish an everyday task which contains the command, direction, something to be done or should not be done which may be instructed. Based on Halliday and Hasan (1994:13), a text can be said as functional that means that language in a text is doing something in context and may help the reader in day-to-day life.

The fact was found when the researcher did the observation in SMP Negeri 24 Medan and did an interview with the English teacher and some of students. The researcher found that there was still problem in learning writing. The students' achievement in writing is still low. Most of students had difficulty in writing. They were lack of ideas or if they have, mostly students didn't know how to write it, did not know how to build sentences which are grammatically correct, did not know the generic structure of each kind of texts, and lack of vocabularies.

There were more than 68% students had problems in writing and more than 65% of students who could not write functional text properly. Their score were still low and under the Minimum Criteria Mastery (KKM) applied by school that is 75.

**Table 1.1 Students' Scores of Writing Competence Tests in 2<sup>nd</sup> semester  
2013/2014**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>8C</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>≥ 75</b>	<b>23 Students</b>	<b>71,87</b>
		<b>&lt; 75</b>	<b>9 Students</b>	<b>28,12</b>
<b>8E</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>≥ 75</b>	<b>21 Students</b>	<b>65,62</b>
		<b>&lt; 75</b>	<b>11 Students</b>	<b>34,37</b>

The researcher found that it was also caused by inappropriate strategy which was used by the teacher. The teacher mostly taught the students only about the theories, asked the students to memorize them without giving chance for the students to practice their writing skill. In this case, teachers need to use a technique or strategy in their teaching process in order to make students success in achieving the goal of the lesson. In Junior High Schools syllabus, advertisement is a kind of short functional text that must be achieved. But the fact is, instead of asking students to create by their own, the teacher just asked them to find out from the internet and collect it as their assignment. The teacher didn't have a strategy or technique to teach short functional text advertisement.

There are several techniques and strategies that can be implemented to teaching writing such as dictogloss, CIRC, STAD, Outside-Inside circle, KWL Plus and the strategy proposed that can overcome the problems is called Role, Audience, Format, Topic (RAFT). RAFT strategy was introduced by Nancy Vandervanter, a middle grades English teacher, to encourage students to write

from different perspective (Santa, 1988). By using RAFT strategy, teacher encourages students to write creatively, to think a topic from various points of view, to a specific audience in a variety formats of texts because to convey the reader, the researcher needed to consider those aspects. In guiding students to write a short functional text by using this strategy, the teacher can provides opportunities for the students to demonstrate their understanding or enhance comprehension of a topic or subject through a writing experience that helps them to think about subject and communicate their understanding of it in creative and interesting way, enhance students' engagement in writing, and encourages students to organize their thoughts, and keeps the students attention because they are focused on the certain topic by considering it in various perspective. Even RAFT strategy would be time consuming, but the teacher that fully implementes RAFT strategy was worth the result (Richard and Skolits, 2009).

RAFT strategy was implemented in various subject areas, in social or science studies. Some researcher found that implementation of RAFT Strategy in language studies was successful. RAFT Strategy was implemented to find out the students' writing competency. Parilasanti et al (2014) claim there was a significant differences in students' writing competency between the students who taught by RAFT strategy and conventional strategy. Likewise Alisa and Rosa (2013) state that RAFT strategy can be chosen for the alternative strategy to teach writing skill especially in writing functional text.

Although RAFT strategy were initially developed as a literacy and writing tool, it has been adapted to other disicplines (Buehl, 2001). Richard and Skolits

(2009) claim RAFT strategy was successfully implemented in science class. They found that the RAFT strategy was easy to implement and effective at engaging their students in higher levels of thinking while promoting cooperative team work among students. In line with Groenke and Puckett (2006) that state RAFT strategy has been used in science classes to enable students to address environmental literacy and citizenship and to develop skills that will be beneficial beyond the classroom. RAFT Strategy has been implemented in science classes to integrate and assess science literacy, including writing in small-group literature circles, keeping science journals, and creating nonfiction science books (Senn, et al., 2013). So that, the researcher challenged and want to prove that RAFT strategy can help students' problem in writing advertisement as a kind of short functional text.

By considering the importance of the statements and facts above, the researcher is motivated to do a research on the effect of students' achievement in writing short functional text especially advertisement by using RAFT strategy.

## **B. The Problem of the Study**

Based on the background of the study, the research problem is formulated as the following:

“Does the Role-Audience-Format-Topic (RAFT) Strategy significantly affect the students' achievement in writing short functional text?”

### **C. The Objective of the Study**

This study is aimed to find out the effectiveness of applying RAFT strategy on students' grade VIII SMP Negeri 24 Medan achievement in writing short functional text.

### **D. The Scope of the Study**

The scope of this study is limited to investigate the students' achievement in writing Short Functional text especially advertisement by applying the RAFT strategy.

### **E. The Significance of the Study**

Dealing with the purposes which would like to be achieved, this study is expected to give some benefits to English teaching learning development. These benefits can be categorized as the followings:

Theoretically, this study is expected to be able to strengthen some typically previous researches, give contribution in educational research development in Indonesia and becomes references for further references.

Practically, in the context of teaching and learning process, this study is expected to provide an effective way to facilitate English teachers in teaching writing to students, especially writing short functional text.

Later, the use of RAFT Strategy in teaching writing hopefully can help students improve their ability to write short functional text by following teacher's instructions.