

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Language is the important part of human existence and social process that has so many functions to perform the life activities of human beings. One of the functions of a language is as a tool of communication. There are several forms of communication namely spoken and written. The purpose of communication is to send a message or information from a writer or speaker to reader or listener. The fact that human beings are social mankind; they certainly realize that they cannot survive without interacting with other people. Because of that, people start to make their own way to interact, and then a language is being used.

In Indonesia, English has become the first foreign language which is taught from elementary level up to university. English is also intensively used in international communication, in written as well as in spoken communication. In addition, many books of science and technology, art, and other published issues are written in English.

In English language, there are four skills to be mastered. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Speaking and writing are grouped into productive skills while listening and reading are included into receptive skills. Writing is one of the four language skills which is very important to be learnt. In fact, writing is not easy. Among those skills, writing is the most difficult skill to

be mastered, because it needs hard thinking in producing words, sentences, and paragraph. Especially in this study, the writer focuses on the writing skill.

Writing is one of the language skills that should be taught besides the other three skills. It is regarded as a productive skill which assists students in expressing their ideas in written form. Schoen. *et al* (1982) as quoted by Harmenita and Tiarina (2013) defines that the concept of writing as a “ processes“ that remain our primary concern. It is not easy to translate concept in our brain to be a written language, and we must be clever to choose and to combine the vocabulary to create meaningful sentences. We also must pay our attention to the grammar, so it is normal if the students think that writing is a difficult subject because of their paying to many attentions such as idea, concept, vocabulary and grammar. In addition, writing in English is considered as the most important part to be learnt by every students, especially in high school. It is stated that in Educational Unit Curriculum (KTSP or *Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pembelajaran*) of Junior High School at grade seventh in writing, students must have ability to develop and their idea in writing, there are descriptive and procedure.

So, based on the statements in advance, Purwanti (2013:44) claims that descriptive contains description or explanation about person, animal, place, or thing specifically. It means that the students use their imagination and knowledge in their writing. A paragraph is a distinct unit of thought which may contain a topic sentence (Chitravelu, et.al 2005:165). In conclusion, descriptive paragraph is a paragraph that describe about person, animal, place, or thing specifically.

Based on the preliminary observation of Grade VII of SMP Negeri 2 Tanjungbalai on June 27th 2013 that was by asking the English teacher about the students' achievement in writing especially descriptive paragraph, she said that most of the students thought that writing is difficult. She found that the students still did not understand clearly what a descriptive paragraph is. They do not know how to transfer their ideas, even how to arrange a sentence. So, the teacher should teach by other methods or techniques which can intimate the students to write.

When the researcher asked the teacher about the students' score list for writing test in two semesters, it was found out that, the minimum criteria mastery (*KKM* or *Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimum*) was applied 70 meanwhile the scores of the students are lower. Many students couldn't exceed the minimum criteria mastery (*KKM*) which was applied by school for English lesson. And the data of two semester are follows :

Table 1.1
The mean of the Class VII-1 Students' Score in Writing

Session	Score	Students	Percentage	Mean
1 st Session 2012/2013	< 70	27 Students	77.2%	52.7
	≥ 70	8 Students	22.8 %	
2 nd Session 2012/2013	< 70	26 Students	74.3 %	56.8
	≥ 70	9 Students	25.7%	

Source : Students' accumulated score of SMP Negeri 2 Tanjungbalai academic year 2012-2013

Table 1.2
The mean of the Class VII-2 Students' Score in Writing

Session	Score	Students	Percentage	Mean
1 st Session 2012/2013	< 70	24 Students	68.6%	54.3
	≥ 70	11 Students	31.4%	
2 nd Session 2012/2013	< 70	28 Students	80%	51.8
	≥ 70	7 Students	20%	

Source : Students' accumulated score of SMP Negeri 2 Tanjungbalai academic year 2012-2013

From the previous data, it can be concluded that the students' ability in writing in that class is still low. It can be seen from the mean of students' score where the mean is still under the *KKM*.

The researcher also found some problems in the teaching and learning processes. First, students felt bored when they learnt because of unchangeable method from the teacher. In this case, teacher used lecturing method. Next, students were only asked to write without any clear instruction and guidance. Those were the problems facing by students in writing.

The teacher said that most of students had difficulties in writing descriptive paragraph because they didn't understand what their teacher had explained. So, the students thought that English is not fun and do not want to be serious in learning English.

Based on the problem, according to previous studies, Harmer (2007) as quoted by Harmenita and Tiarina (2013:30) explains that writing can be defined as writing- for- learning and writing- for- writing. Writing- for- learning means writing as a tool to practice the language they have learned, and in writing- for- writing, it is a tool to develop the students' ability as writer. The previous researcher, Sianipar and Sabrina (2014) found that the students can increase their knowledge and achievement to write and develop their idea into writing by using outlining technique, because an outline is a tool to make the writing easier, because the main point is listed as the topic to be discussed. Muirhead (2005) found that writing an outlines provide opportunities for students to refine their outlining skills and increase their understanding of critical thinking. Teachers can

develop instructional plans that assist the student's cognitive information processing skills. The researcher offers the teacher to apply Outlining Technique to solve the problem. Tardy (2010) found that the teacher can use the outlining as the teaching writing technique and the students can be easier and more focus on the topic. Coffin. et al (2003:37) explains that outlines may be drawn up to match the expectations set by certain text types, such as an argument essay in social science, for example. For inexperienced researchers such plans can help identify gaps in the development of ideas, arguments, and sources of evidence. After seeing the explanation in advance, the researcher offers outlining technique to repair the student's writing especially in descriptive paragraph. As an expectation, it can help students in writing descriptive paragraph and students are able to focus more in writing easily and well by applying this technique.

From the previous explanation, the research was conducted to see how the application of outlining technique affects students' achievement in writing, particularly writing descriptive paragraph.

B. The Problem of the Study

The problem of the study is formulated as follows :

“Is there any significant effect of using outlining technique on the students' achievement in writing descriptive paragraph”?

C. The Objectives of the Study

In line with the problem, the objective is to investigate if there is a significant effect of applying outlining technique on the students' achievement of grade seventh of SMP Negeri 2 Tanjungbalai in writing descriptive paragraph.

D. The Scope of the Study

This study is just focused on students' achievement in writing descriptive paragraph specifically on describing object (animal) by applying one technique that is, outlining technique.

E. The Significance of the Study

Results of this study are expected to be giving out the theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, the expected of this research is to enrich the learning of science writing especially in writing descriptive paragraph by using outlining technique.

Practically, the result of the study is important and useful for those :

1. Teacher, to increase their own professionalism in teaching writing by using Outlining Technique and the result of the study would be very useful for teachers of English and others who are concerning with assessment of teaching English.
2. Students, giving information to increase their writing ability and to motivate the students to be better in writing descriptive paragraph.
3. The readers, to have interest research to enlarge their understanding about writing descriptive paragraph.