

# CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

## A. The Background of the Study

For more than six decades now, research and practice in English language teaching has identified the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing (Brown 2001:232). Those skills are communication skills that are important in all subject areas in the curriculum (Walberg, 2004:7) and has always formed part of the syllabus in the teaching of English (Harmer, 2004:31).

As one of English skills, writing cannot be ignored from its role to improve students' knowledge. Writing skill needs to be mastered by the learners, because learning how to write in English is important (Davies, 1998:1). In last few years, the schools have been emphasizing the importance of knowing how to write. In many countries, education systems emphasize writing for taking tests. For many students, the only reason to practice writing is to pass examinations or to get a good grade in the class. This is not likely to make students interested in writing (Yan, 2005:19).

As a result, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers and students face certain problems in teaching and learning writing. Too many high school and college students, and adults, find writing difficult. Learning to write in either a first or second language is one of the most difficult tasks a learner encounters (Richards, 1990). This statement is supported by Kitchakarn (2012:110), who

As writing is a tool for communication and it is both a skill and a means of self-expression (Mercer and Mercer, 1989:446), when students write something

down, they have already been thinking about what they are going to say (Oshima and Hogue, 1997:2). But in fact, one of major difficulties in writing is to find something to write about (Clark and Starr, 1981:262). In English classes, students frequently complain that finding something to write about is more difficult than writing. They do not have any idea of what to write. Cimcoz (1999), also pointed out that students cannot choose the right words, and they do not know how to start their writing.

One factor causes the problem is the strategy applied by the English teachers. They do not have sufficient and suitable teaching techniques, and also lack appropriate materials in their classes. Besides, many teachers still use the traditional teacher-centered method in writing classes, which makes classes boring and ineffective (Sritunyarat, 2003).

To solve the problem, English teachers would do well to provide students with as many acceptable suggestions as they can. Teachers also must find an effective strategy in teaching writing skill, especially in teaching descriptive writing - and Round Robin Writing is the answer.

Round Robin Writing is the strategy in which students work cooperatively in groups to create a kind of text. It can be done in groups in which members pass their paper to another member of their group who continues developing the writing for amount of time, and this continues until everyone in the group has had an opportunity to add to the writing.

Round Robin Writing is an effective strategy to avoid the boredom in learning. It can be applied in order to raise the enjoyable among students in their

writing process. It helps students to promote fluency in writing. It is also appropriate to solve the problem of having no idea of what to write because this strategy coach one another when a partner has difficulty.

Many researchers have been conducted in different contexts about teaching through Round Robin Writing have reached the same result. Based on the observation which had been conducted by Detaprawati (2013) in grade VII of SMP N 1 Parakan Semarang, the result shows that Team Pair Solo and Round Robin technique is proven effective to be implemented in teaching written descriptive text for seventh grade students at secondary school. By using both techniques, students can share and develop their ideas more frequent, allow students to work in small groups or in pairs to actively engage in the learning process and improve their understanding of the content. Each member of the team is not only responsible for their own learning, but also for helping team mates to learn.

Damanik (2013) also conducted a study for the tenth grade of SMA N 1 TanjungMorawa Medan. It was found that Round Robin is appropriate for the students' need and provides an opportunity for the students to work cooperatively and creatively in writing, edit and revise their writing in order to practice their grammar skill, and share ideas among the members of group.

In research for teachers of older secondary level and adult ESL students in New York that has been conducted by DelliCarpini (2006) using Round Robin technique can help the teacher successfully to create students centered learning experiences that focus on varied approaches to content, process, and product.

Integrating a Round Robin technique with commonly themed poetry related to a thematic topic can provide teachers with the ability to meet the needs of diverse learners, successfully group students and integrate meaningful material into their classroom.

Teachers hold an important role in solving students' problems in writing. Making the teaching-learning process interesting and meaningful, teachers can apply strategy in the process to increase students' writing achievement. In this case, the writer implements Round Robin Writing strategy to make students get their own ideas and put them down in a good text. Round Robin Writing is a teaching strategy in facilitating the learners to speak and to write fluently.

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

In the relation to the background of the study, the research addresses the following problem as the following:

“Is there any significant effect of applying Round Robin Writing strategy on students' achievement in writing descriptive text?”

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

Applying Round Robin Writing strategy as one of the writing strategy in teaching is expected to help the students in writing competence and to encourage their motivation, so they are interested in learning, and challenged to learn. Based on the question formulated in the problem of the study, the objective of this study

is to investigate the significant effect of applying Round Robin Writing strategy on students' achievement in writing descriptive text.

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

Teaching of writing can be conducted in many ways and activities that a wise and professional teacher can think of in order to succeed in motivating students to write academic well. To teach a language and its skills successfully to the students, it is important for the teacher to apply the teaching strategy. By applying the teaching strategy in the classroom can help both the teacher; to teach English language and its skills, and students; to learn English and to master its skills, especially the writing skill. There are many strategies available that can be used by the teacher but in this research, the study focuses on the application of applying Round Robin Writing strategy in writing descriptive text to Grade VIII SMP Swasta MUSDA Medan.

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

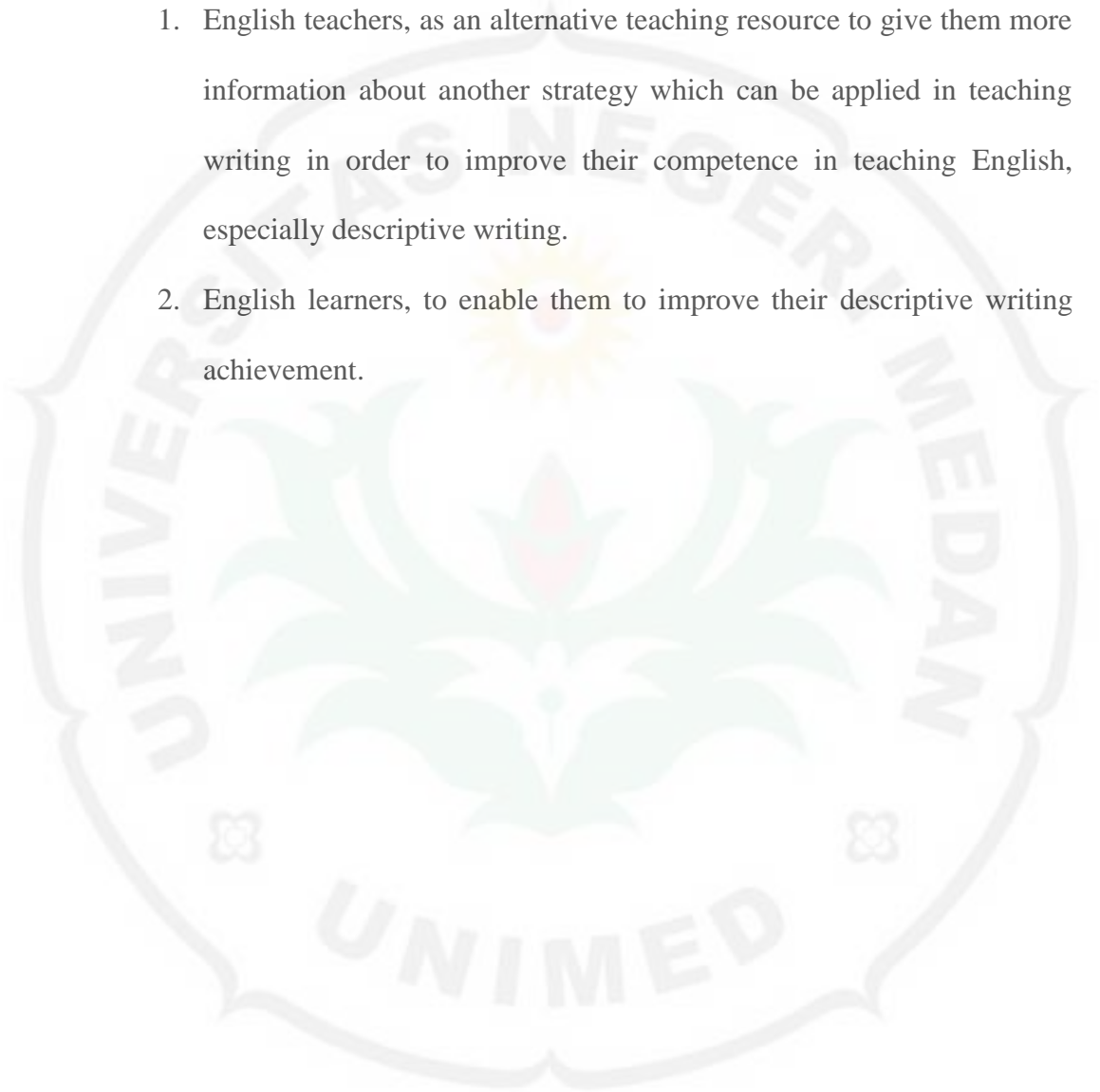
The result of the study is expected to be useful theoretically and practically.

Theoretically, the result of the study is expected to be useful for the readers, to enrich their horizon in theory of English learning. The result of the study is also expected to be useful for the researcher for their further study.

Practically, the result of the study is expected to be useful for:



1. English teachers, as an alternative teaching resource to give them more information about another strategy which can be applied in teaching writing in order to improve their competence in teaching English, especially descriptive writing.
2. English learners, to enable them to improve their descriptive writing achievement.



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