

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

English is one of the formal subjects that is included in the curriculum. It has been taught from the primary up to university level. The Department of National Education has made English as a compulsory subject and positioned it as the first foreign language to be taught in school based on the curriculum. In order to be able to communicate in English, students are expected to master the four English skills, they are the mastery of the receptive skills (reading and listening) and the mastery of the productive skills (speaking and writing). One of the language skills that will be focused in this study is the writing skill.

Writing is a process of discovery and organizing the ideas, developing the ideas, conveying them into paper, reshaping and revising them (Coffin et al, 2003:34). It means the students should be able to express their idea that they discovered into paper in a text form that will be clear to a reader. Furthermore, writing is a skill to express the ideas in an effective and organized way. Writing is a skill that can be acquired through practice. It is also stated by Grenville (2001:vi) that no one's born knowing how to write – but it is a skill that most people can learn, and the more you do it, the easier it becomes. Actually, most of the students find some difficulties in learning writing. They think that writing text is a difficult task to do. This assumption is wrong because writing is an activity that has a lot of fun and makes the students more creative.

Based on the researcher's experiences during the time spent in the Field Practice Experience (*Praktek Pengalaman Lapangan* : PPL) at the State Senior High School (*Sekolah Menengah Atas*: SMAN) 2 Pematang Siantar, many students had difficulties in writing. They did not give much attention and enthusiasm on writing task because they do not have an appropriate direct means in getting in touch with the ideas. The researcher found the data of the XI grade students' writing test in the first semester at 2013/2014 academic year from the English teacher. The teacher said that many students get the score below Minimal Completeness Criteria (*Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal*) of English lesson for Senior High School. The score of writing test from the students can be seen in table 1.1.

Table 1.1 The Eleventh Grade (XI) Students' Score of Writing Test

Class	Semesters	Score	Students	Percentage
XI-PIA-1	1 st Semester 2012/2013	<75	14	33,33
		≥75	28	66,66
XI-PIA-2	1 st Semester 2012/2013	<75	16	38,09
		≥75	26	61,90

The Minimal Completeness Criteria (KKM) applied for the eleventh grade (XI) by school is 75. From the data above, it can be fulfilled that the students' ability in writing in that class is still low. It can be seen from the number of students where 30 of 84 students from two classes have score under the Minimal Completeness Criteria. The underlying problem is the productivity of a student, not the lack of the ideas but the lack of direct means of getting in touch with the ideas. In other words, having ideas is not a problem for a student, but how to

develop and proceed the ideas into a writing product is a problem. In order to help the students engage with the ideas, a good strategy, method, or technique should be used.

Clustering is one of the effective techniques that is useful to help the students to get in touch with the ideas. Rico (2000:38) states that clustering technique is a direct means that can be used to generate ideas for writing of any form : essays, poems, short stories, business reports, songlyrics, even novels. It means the students will be helped to develop and proceed their ideas easily since the reasons why the students are difficult to write are that they lack of direct means to develop and proceed the ideas. He also state that clustering is a very effective technique in writing because it seems to be a reflection of the way design mind naturally works – that is, it clusters for patterns meaningful to it all the time as it scans its universe (Rico 2000:28). It means clustering is a good way to make students have the patterns of ideas meaningfully.

Thus, in order to make students write easily, the researcher is very interested in conducting a study on students' achievement in writing analytical exposition text by applying clustering technique.

B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the background of the study, the research problem of this study is formulated as the following: “Is there any significant effect of using clustering technique on student's achievement in writing analytical exposition text?”

C. The Objective of the Study

Clustering is a direct means in getting in touch with the ideas. It is an effective technique to make students develop and proceed their ideas easily and meaningfully. By using this technique, students become creative to think and write naturally. Related to the problem of the study, the objective of this study is to discover whether there is a significant effect of applying clustering technique on students' achievement in writing analytical exposition text.

D. The Scope of the Study

Based on the background above, this study will be limited to the effectiveness using Clustering Technique in teaching writing on grade XI at SMAN 2 Pematang Siantar.

E. The Significance of the Study

As this study concerns with the use of clustering technique to affect the students' achievement in writing, the findings of this study are expected to be useful as,

1. Theoretically for the teachers to improve the quality of students' writing and for the researchers to use this study as reference for next researches.
2. Practically to improve the students' writing skill and widen their horizon about the function of clustering technique in affect their writing skill.