

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

There are four major skills in communicating through verbal language often defined as listening, speaking, reading and writing. One who studies English and would like to converse well must master the four basic skills. Writing as one of the language skills seem to be a very difficult skill to be mastered. Experiences, events, histories, and ideas can be expressed through writing which is considered very difficult to many students. Sentences formations of ideas and vocabularies are important to be used correctly, so that the writers or the candidate writers can express the ideas freely and completely and the readers can perceive the message totally.

The difficulty of good writing is resulted from some aspects. The first is as (Peat, 2002: 9) stated that writing can be difficult if the writer's learning experience is protracted process of trial and error. It is because the writer or the writing students just keep writing directly what exist in his mind without well prepared procedure from beginning to the end. And when the writer himself or some body else find some errors in the writing, he will of course cross it out and start another writing again and again.

The second difficulty of writing is caused by the general intervention, (Westwood, 2008: 47). For most readers, narrative text, with its settings, characters, actions, outcomes, and a conclusion is easier to read with

understanding than expository text. Most young children are familiar with narrative structure from having listened to stories read to them. However, researchers have discovered that some students with writing exposition difficulties seem to have a poor grasp of typical story structure and can't use it to help them process, understand and remember information.

The next difficulty of writing resulting in the failure of the students in writing achievement has been empirically proved by some researchers. To mention some as (Suprinata, 2002) in the finding of his thesis clearly stated that many students of senior high school made errors in writing, especially in narrative and exposition paragraph. And similar conclusion was also taken by (Marta, 2003) stating that among 40 students, there were only 11 students (27.9%) that could get minimum standard of writing achievement, while the other 29 students (72.5%) failed to get the minimum standard. And the writer assumed that this failure is the result of trial and error way of writing done by the students without applying good procedure based on the nature or the principle of writing itself, and most of the students didn't master adequate vocabularies to cover ideas to transfer into writing symbols.

Personal experience of the writer by analysing the English achievement of the students of grade XI in SMA Negeri 1 Kisaran shows that writing achievement mostly made up the failure of the students in English. Based on the evidence compiled from three academic years, it is found that student's ability in writing is the lowest of the four language skills.

**Table 1 Preliminary Data of Achievement in Writing Exposition essay of SMA Negeri 1 Kisaran**

No	Academic Year	Students' score Class XI		
		Lowest Score	Highest score	Average
1	2007/2008	55	75	60
2	2008/2009	58	75	67
3	2009/2010	60	80	70

*(Source of data kumpulan nilai (DKN) SMA Negeri 1 Kisaran)*

Seeing the evidence above it is concluded that there has been something wrong in the teaching of writing in high school especially in SMA Negeri 1 Kisaran. Consequently, the method of writing or the teaching of writing should not be as the activity of trial and error but must be based on good procedure and related to the principle or the nature of writing. Byrne (1980: 1) stated that writing refers to the skills in using graphic symbols (letter, word, phrase, and sentence), which have to be arranged to certain convention. It means that writing is to be done by appropriate rules related to the types of the writing itself.

Some factors influence students' achievement in writing which are generally divided into social factors that covers attitude, interest, and motivation; and cognitive factors which consists of methods of teaching, material of learning, teacher competence, and facilities of learning process. And it is believed that teaching method is one factor that plays an important role which can affect the students' achievement in writing.

There are many theories on how second or foreign language is learned and how to implement various methods in the classroom. These theories are intended to help teachers to improve teaching – learning process achievement. In addition to ensure that students respect one another in behavioral practices, teachers must

also find ways to engage the class with the lesson plan that they have planned. One of them is Content – Based Instruction (CBI) which has some models which focus on the content and language use based on the topic given and Task-Based Language Teaching which focus on grammar and linguistic competence. It is assumed that it is one of the best methods in teaching English as a Foreign Language(EFL) to overcome the classroom's problems on writing. It is also believed that grammatical ability can positively affect students' achievement in writing as to create self esteem in them.

Besides teaching methods, students' achievement in writing is also influenced by many factors. One of them is gramatical ability. Grammar is extremely important for all lanuage skills including writing. Whatever is spoken or written, the main tool used to construct words or vocabulary is grammar. Mastering grammar will help us to use the correct version of the word for our intended purpose. (Sinclair: 2007: 6 ) The learners do this automatically, however, whether with grammar or not. If other people cannot understand what we are saying or think that we have not expressed ourselves clearly, then it may be because there is a grammatical error. People make judgments about others on the basis of the grammar they use; whether this is fair or right, it definitely happens and it is important that you know about it. The grammatical ability is the ability of all components of grammar of combining meaningful words up to complicated sentences and texts and to combine meaningful words until sentences, the high grammar ability one has.



On the other hand, Some linguists as (Barton, 2010: 1) states that knowing grammar is important for teachers and pupils but it is not an end in itself. He explains that he had gone for only bits of grammar in his teaching that he thought that would make a difference to pupils' reading and writing skills. It was explicitly added that grammar shouldn't dominate teaching rather than trying to have students be involved in active talking about literature, listening to peoples, reading great texts, watching worthwhile films, exploring language, having fun with it. Grammar can actually enhance all of those but it can't replace them.

Thus it is badly needed to do some research about the appropriate difficulty of students in writing and to see the adequate effect of grammar ability on writing achievement. Based on the underlying facts and concept of explanation, this research is intended to discover the effect of teaching methods and students' grammatical ability on students' achievement in writing exposition essay. It means that the effect of applying the two teaching methods and students' grammar ability in teaching writing will be proven whether they are effective towards the students' writing achievement in exposition essay.

## **1.2 Problems of the study**

Based on the background of the research, the problems of this research are formulated as follows:

1. Is the students' achievement in writing exposition essay taught by using Content – Based Instruction (CBI) method significantly higher than taught by using Task – Based Language Teaching (TBLT) method?

2. Is the students' achievement in writing exposition essay for those students with high grammatical ability significantly higher than those students with low grammatical ability?
3. Is there any interaction between Teaching methods and students' grammatical ability to students' achievement in writing exposition essay?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

In line with the problems of the study, the objectives of the research are discovering:

1. to find out whether the students' achievement in writing exposition essay taught by using Content – Based Instruction (CBI) method significantly higher than taught by using Task – Based Language Teaching (TBLT) method.
2. to find out whether the the students' achievement in writing exposition essay for those students with high grammatical ability significantly higher than those students with low grammatical ability.
3. to find out whether there is a significant interaction between teaching methods and the students' grammatical ability to students' achievement in writing exposition essay.

### **1.4 Scope of the Study**

This research focuses on the application of the Content – Based Instruction (CBI) and Task – Based Language Teaching (TBLT) as the teaching method in the classroom to help students improve teaching instruction and to help students increase their writing achievement. Among many factors which influence students' achievement in writing, students' grammatical ability is one factor

which is to be researched by the writer. The writing text chosen to be taught and tested is exposition text since it is one of the most widely used genre text in writing of Senior High School Standard Competency on Educational Unit Oriented Curriculum (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan / KTSP SMA, 2004 and revised in 2008). Exposition text (both in reading and writing) appears in all grades: ten to twelve and it was not one of the text type taught in junior high school. So the teaching and the assessment of exposition for senior high school is not influenced by the students' knowledge taken from junior high school.

### **1.5 Significances of the Study**

The findings of the study are expected to be useful theoretically and practically.

Theoretically: 1) to enrich the science specifically related to English teaching methods in Senior High School, 2) to be the input for the teachers and educational institutions in considering the dynamic students' needs in students' achievement in writing, 3) to give a lot of positive contribution to the improvement of teachers professionalism and the educational institutions and other researchers who want to discover an in-depth research as the follow-up of the result of applying the teaching methods.

Practically: 1) to assist the English teachers in their attempts to improve students' achievement in writing, 2) these can also help teachers to teach writing because by using CBI and TBLT, it will be easy to motivate the students in solving their problems in writing tasks, 3) For the English teachers as one alternative methods when teaching exposition writing