CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1   The Background of Research

Writing is more than a medium of communication. It means that writing is not just the way to communicate to each other but also as means of ideas and emotional expression (Raymond, 1980). Writing makes word permanent, and thus expands the collective memory of human being. Spoken words disappear as soon as they are spoken, but writing freezes their thoughts, makes them visible and permanent so people can examine and test their quality. It can be seen that writing is a way of remembering because it makes word permanent and writing also is a good way to communicate because when writing, the writer really thinks about what he or she want to be communicated by writing it.

Writing is very important in today's world life, as Graham (2006) stated that students who do struggle significantly with writing, and adults who cannot or will not engage in writing, are at a terrible disadvantage in today's world. By upper elementary grades, writing becomes a critical tool both for learning and for showing what one knows. Students who do not write well cannot draw on its power to support and extend learning and development, and adults with inadequate writing skills will face significant barriers in further education and employment. The same idea is also noted by Boardman (2008: 3) that the paragraph is the basic unit of academic writing in English. Students who want to study in a college or in a university or to get a certain job, need to learn how to

write, because all other types of academic writing, such as reports, essays, compositions and research papers are based on the paragraph of a writing text.

Students in Indonesia have been taught writing course since they were in the first class of Senior High School. But, it was found that they face some difficulties in writing. As Hazanah (2003) found that commonly, students are difficult in starting the writing, they got confuse about what to write and also about how to generate ideas. This is because of the lack of knowledge about the steps on writing was procedural factors that cause the difficulties for all students. And the most important thing is that, writing is usually get least attention in teaching learning in classroom, which make students are rarely exposed to writing.

Meanwhile, most of students find it is difficult to develop ideas in their mindsas Campbell (cited in Budiarta, 2011) claims. Actually, they might have something to state in their mind, but they are often confused to express and develop their ideas into a good writing. Further, one of the students' problems is that they have difficulty in arranging information or ideas logically to achieve coherence in their writing, which is the foremost requirement in writing.

This matter also happens to the students in SMA Negeri 1 Sidamanik. As the researcher has observed the students in that school, the researcher found that many students think that writing is often considered as the most difficult and boring activity among the four language skills in English. This is because acquiring writing skill needs a lot of practice, and to produce a piece of essay needs long process. Most of researchers recognize this difficulty in writing is

caused by the complexity of writing (Urquhart, 2005). The complexity of writing encountered by students involves the level skills of planning and organizing as well as the level skills of spelling, punctuation, word choice, grammar and usage. The writer has observed the real condition of the students in writing in SMA Negeri 1 Sidamanik and found that the students' score of writing course was under the *Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM)*. It can be seen from the English result study of the students in two semesters of final tests.

Table 1.1 The Writing Scores of English Final Semester Examination in SMA Negeri 1 Sidamanik

No.	Academic Year	The Scores Average of Writing (Social&Science Class)	Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM)
1.	2010/2011	59.11	60
2.	2011/2012	59.4	60
3.	2012/2013	58.7	60

Based on the table above, the scores of the students' achievement in English writing are not good enough or still cannot pass the passing grade. As the writer has also observed, the students' score in writing course is also low. The researcher gets the score from the English teachers who teach in grade eleven of social and science class.The scores are taken from the written test in the final semester test. The scores of the eleventh grade students in writing are shown in this following table:

Table 1.2 Scores of Writing on the Final Semester in SMA Negeri 1 Sidamanik

No	Writing Scores	Academic Year 2010/2011		Academic Year 2011/2012		Academic Year 2012/2013	
		Number of Students	%	Number of Students	%	Number of Students	%
1	85-100	12	6. 03	10	4. 90	23	17. 29
2	75-84	33	16. 58	35	17.16	17	12.78
3	60-74	81	40. 70	80	39. 21	88	66. 17
4	50-59	69	34. 67	71	34. 80	5	3. 75
5	0-49	4	2. 01	8	3.92	-	-
	Total	199	100%	204	100%	133	100%

From the above table, it shows that only 4. 90 % of the eleventh grade students can achieve 85-100 scores on the year 20011/2012. In the year of 2012/ 2013, only 17.29% of students can reach above 85 scores in writing test. Most of the students can only achieve above 60 to 74. It means that the students' achievement in writing at the eleventh grade of SMA Negeri 1 Sidamanik is still low. This is regarded as low because the standard score in writing must be 60 which is specified by the teacher in SMA Negeri 1 Sidamanik.

The unsatisfactory achievement in writing is in contrast with the expectation in curriculum that students are expected to be able to write in various genres. In addition, based on the syllabus - based curriculum (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan: KTSP) the students are required to learn some genre such as Narrative, Report, Spoof, Analytical Exposition, Hortatory Exposition, description etc. They must be able to express their ideas in the form of written text.In this study the researcher chooses description text as the genre in writing activity that needs to be improved.Descriptive text appertains into the academic writing. This

genre requires the students to have a critical thinking, scientific ideas, and clear expression toward a topic to be described. Those characteristics cause a lot of students getting frustrated in composing this text. Besides, referring to the syllabus of school - based curriculum (KTSP) this kind of text is only taught at the second grade of senior high school on the second term. Differ from other kinds of genres; Narrative, Report, Spoof, recount text, etc, however, they had been introduced and learned since junior high school level. So, many students regard that this text is still a new thing for them. For this reason, descriptive text is finally chosen as the genre to be focused in this research.

Description writing is a written text in which the writer describes an object trough the sensory experience—how something looks, sounds, tastes. Mostly it is about visual experience, but description also deals with other kinds of perception (Kane 2000). In describing an object, a writer may use some grammatical features in description writing. while the way descriptive text is elaborated is describing things from a technical or factual point of view, the present tense is predominantly used; for example:has, eats, sings, lays, swim. Although present tense may be used in literary descriptions, it is past tense that tends to dominate. Relational verbs are used when classifying and describing appearance/qualities and parts/functions of phenomena (is, are, has, have). Action verbs are used when describing behaviours/uses (Knapp 2005).

In literary and commonsense descriptions, action verbs are used metaphorically to create effect; for example, Mia *bubbled* with enthusiasm. Declan *smashed* the record. Mental verbs are used when describing feelings in

literary descriptions. Adjectives are used to add extra information to nouns and may be technical, everyday or literary, depending on the text. Often adjectives used in literary descriptions can be considered to be affective due to the emotive impact they have on readers. This can also be the case with the way that some verbs and adverbs are used. Adverbs are used to add extra information to verbs to provide more detailed description. Literary descriptions use a range of devices to create effects such as similes, metaphors, personification and alliteration; for example, Sally's face shone *like a beacon* when she heard that she had won the competition (Simile). The experience was *a nightmare* and something James would remember for the rest of his life (Metaphor). The wind *whistled* through the trees andHarry found it difficult to sleep (Personification). Descriptive text has two generic structure, such as: identification (to identify the object to describe) and description (describes parts, qualities, and characteristics of the objects).

In fact students in SMA Negeri 1 Sidamanik face the difficulty in writing a descriptive text. There is no wonder if students in SMA Negeri 1 Sidamanik think that writing is a boring and difficult activity because of its complexity. There is a complex requirement to be fulfilled by students in composing a descriptive text. Students think that it is a difficult writing assignment the students have. During the observation, the researcher found that students get difficulty in making identification (as the first generic structure). They spent a lot of time focusing only on how to start writing. How can the students compose a complete descriptive text, when they cannot successfully give a good identification in what they are going to describe. This factor may come from the students' experience

about descriptive text which is still low. Besides that, lacking of scientific ideas and pre-writing activities are two causes that the students get depressed in composing a text. As Elbow (1998) stated that a good writer should have a good prewriting skill in composing text by transferring scientific ideas to convey feeling of experience.

From that case, both teachers and students need a significant way of teaching and learning in order to improve the student's achievement in writing. However in the reality the teachers always use the conventional ways of teaching like giving some questions, discussion and homework without any challenges activities that will train their brain to think critically. And of course it will affect much the students' achievement in writing. As writing is the most crucial skill for English learners, then, the low achievement in writing needs to be improved.

To enable teachers to increase students' writing achievement the help of technique is crucial. Technique is any of wide variety of exercises, activities, or task used in the language classroom for realizing lesson objectives (Brown 2000). It means teaching technique can realize the learning objective of writing. Some researchers have found that using technique for writing is effective to make students' writing better, as Safriyantinur (2008) said that the application of small group work technique in teaching writing is effective to make the students' writing achievement better.

Indeed, there are many kinds of teaching techniques that can be applied by the teacher. But it is believed that they have their own strength based on the genre of writing, since in this thesis the genre to be discussed is descriptive writing, the

Roundtable teaching technique will be used. The idea of choosing this roundtable teaching technique is because the roundtable can be used for brainstorming, reviewing, or practicing while also serving as a teambuilder (Kagan, 2009).The brainstorming can reinforce ideas from the writing or can be used to set the stage for upcoming discussions.In addition, Roundtable Teaching Technique is one kind of cooperative learning that it is organized in group working and requires a group or team working in the teaching learning process in the classroom. The key here is the question or the problem teachers have asked the students to consider. It has to be one that has the potential for a number of different "right" answers. All members need to know and be ready to explain their group's answer(s) and when students help their group mates, they help themselves and their whole group, because the response given belongs to the whole group, not just to the group member giving it.Roundtable is most effective when used in a carefully sequenced series of activities.

However, roundtable technique is not the only technique that can increase the students/ achievement in writing practically in descriptive writing. There is other technique can be used for this purpose namely clustering teaching technique. Rico (2000) tells that clustering can be used to generate ideas for writing any form: essays, poems, short stories, business reports, song lyrics even novels. Clustering is a powerful inspirational/organizational tool: it always reassures that someone has something to say. Best of all, someone doesn't have to worry about the sequence of ideas, connections and relationships as the cluster unfolds effortlessly. "Clustering, as already suggested, is a design-mind function, just as

many natural forms come in clusters-grapes, lilacs, spider eggs, cherries-so thoughts and images, given free rein, seem to come in clusters of association." (Rico 2000:15). Rico also describes clustering as a phenomenon of nonlinear connection around a "storm center of meanings" which she calls "nucleus". A nucleus word or short phrase acts as the stimulus for recording all the associations that spring to mind in a very brief period of time.

Actually, those techniques can be applied in any content area of writing genre, but in this study those techniques are applied in descriptive writing genre. Genre is a term for grouping texts together, representing how writers typically use language to respond to recurring situations. Every genre has a number of features which make it different to other genres: each has a specific purpose, an overall structure, specific linguistic features, and is shared by members of the culture (Hyland, 2009).

However, the appropriate techniques in teaching writing is not the only factor that can increase students' writing achievement. There is another point which is very important that a teacher should know when they are teaching writing in classroom that is personal traits. Personality of someone will influence the product of writing (Hyland, 2009: 25). He addedthat process-writing psychologically leads to significantly better writing. It does, however, and psychological factors will help guide problem-definition, frame solutions and ultimately shape writing. And it will influence to how they interpret something, this will create different perspective to the same topic on the writing.

In addition, in relation to writing, "personality is potentially important factors in the process of writing." Brown (2007: 166). Personality of a writer will influence they way of expressing ideas, choosing vocabulariesthat this influence to the way they build their sentences, the way a writer interprets an object is different and also different perspectives towards an object. There are students who concerns of perceiving an object in more details therefore, there are students imagine a concrete perception and look for overall impression about something, rather than the details. There are students who like to make decision on the basis of principles and regard something as highly objective, while there are also students who like to think subjectively etc.

As the result, this description will bring to a conclusion that the personality or personal traits are as important ways to be considered by the teacher as to teach writing in the instruction process. It is because the more eligible technique with students' need, the more significant the knowledge got by the students.

Personal traits cover two types namely introvert and extrovert. In psychology, an extrovert is a person concerned more about the practical realities of life, rather than restricting to one's inner thoughts and feelings. Basically, an individual with extrovert personality traits tends to be keener on what is happening around him. It is in contrast with introvert. Introverts more often appear to be quiet and thoughtful.In psychology, introversion is defined as "the state of, or tendency towards being wholly or predominantly concerned with an interest in one's own mental life". Introverts are more often self consciousness,

passionate, quiet and deliberate. They are not so social, and prefer to spend time in loneliness, doing a range of activities, such as reading, writing, painting, etc., which makes them happy.

In conclusion, this study is conducted to see the students' achievement in descriptive writing by using roundtable and clustering teaching techniques which are suited to the students' personal traits which are extrovert and introvert.

1.2 The Identification of the Research Problems

In relation with the background, the problems can be formulated as follows:

1. Why do the students in grade eleven of SMA Negeri 1 Sidamanik getdifficulties in writing skill especially in descriptive writing?

2. What are the techniques to make a good descriptive writing for the students of grade eleven in SMA Negeri 1 Sidamanik?

3. Are the techniques effective to guide the students in making a good writing for students of grade eleven in SMA Negeri 1 Sidamanik?

4. How is students' achievement in writing descriptive texttaught by using the techniques to the students of grade eleven in SMA Negeri 1 Sidamanik viewed from students' personal traits?

1.3 The Problems of the Research

Based on the identification of the problems above, the problems of the research can be formulated as follows:

1. Is the students' achievement in writing taught by usingRoundtable Teaching Technique higher than taught by using Clustering Teaching Technique?

2. Is the students' achievement in writing with introvert personal trait higher than students with extrovert personal trait?

3. Is there any interaction between teaching techniques and personal traits in teaching writing?

1.4 The Objectivesof the Research

Based on the explanation on the background of the study before, the objectives of the research are formulated as in the following:

1. To find out whether the students' achievement in writing taught by using roundtable is higher than taught by using Problem Based Learning.

2. To find out whether the students' achievement in writing with introvert personal traits is higher than students with extrovert personal traits.

3. To find out whether there is an interaction between techniques of teaching and personal traits.

1.5 The Scope of the Research

This research is confined in using Roundtable and Clustering Teaching Techniques as teaching techniques in teaching writing. And they will be related with the personal traits of the students in the classroom which is limited to only introvert and extrovert on students' writing achievement.The writing genre

observed in this study focuses on descriptive writing which shouldbe achieved by the students of grade eleven as what is required to be learnt in curriculum in SMA Negeri 1 Sidamanik.

1.6 The Significances of the Research

The result of this research is significant theoretically and practically.for both students and teachers. For teachers, this research provides whether using the techniques can improve the achievement of writing and also to offer the more effective techniques and suitable for students' learning style.For students, this research can be used to increase their achievement on writing based on their own personal traits.

Theoretically, the result of the research is useful to give alternative for English teachers to apply the techniques of teaching that are suitable for the students' personal traits, to provide the steps by steps of Roundtable and Clustering as Cooperative Learning in teaching English writing. It also gives a lot of positive contribution to the improvement of teacher's professionalism and the educational institution. Finally, the researcher hopes that the result of this research can be used as a vehicle to develop theories in teaching and learning especially in English.

Practically, the result of this research is useful to enrich the models of learning used in teaching writing, to give ideas of considering the students' personal traits when teaching writing and as a comparison for other researchers who make a research in techniques of teaching.