

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter is divided into nine sub-chapters. They are the Background of Study, the Reason for Choosing the Topic, the Research Question, the Objective of the Study, the Hypothesis, the Significances of the Study, the Limitation of the Study, the Definition of Key Terms, and the Outline of the Study.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In learning language including English, there are four macro skills namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing that should be comprehend by the students. Those skills are the targets of learning English. A learner has to complete a long process of learning to master those four language skills. In order to master those macro skills comprehensively, the process of teaching and learning should intergrate the first skill that human acquire which is listening, then speaking after that reading to the last skill which is writing. They should also practice often, if possible daily. Therefore, the students have to apply the knowledge of language that they get during the learning process into a real life. Since English is a foreign language in Indonesia, then it is quite difficult especially for active skills like speaking and writing to be implemented daily. Learning writing is a challenging obstacle because it needs prior knowledge in order to be able for students to write in English well.

Most people believe that writing is a “natural gift” instead of a learned skill in everyday life (Langan, 2001). Hence, they usually avoid writing because they think they are not that good at writing. Consequently, this behavior will break students’ motivation in learning writing because they already feel that they cannot do it well. Like the other skills, writing can be learnt from practices. Students find writing difficult because in writing students do not simply put their ideas into some media such as paper and computer without knowing what actually they are writing.

Therefore, writing course is considered as the most difficult skill in languages learning, especially English. Mostly, it becomes the problem for students in Indonesia because the English learning in Indonesia is a foreign language, not even a second language. Richards and Renandya (2002) state that the skills involved in writing are complex: not only on generating and organizing idea, but also in translating these ideas into a readable text. Furthermore, when the students write, they also have to pay attention to the higher level skills (planning and organizing) and the lower level skills (spelling, punctuation, word choice, etc). By seeing into those components of writing language, teachers can find that mostly students’ language proficiency is still weak. As a consequence, writing has many aspects to be well taught and organized in order for students to produce a good writing.

Based on the experience in the teaching practice as a teacher trainee and information sharing with the classroom English teacher as well as other teacher trainees, there are some problems occurred when teaching writing. First, most of

the students had low interest in learning English. When the teacher gave a task or homework, some students did not do it. Second, they did not know how to make a sentence in English, especially in developing their idea. Third, their language proficiency was weak. It was shown when the students wrote a sentence; the typical mistakes they made were lack of vocabulary, and errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation in their writing. In summary, they were not motivated to write because they were passive and afraid to do it.

Because of the facts above, there were situation that could influence students in learning English. For example, the school environment, if there are a lot of students in a classroom then the teacher can not control the class effectively which makes the teaching and learning processes are more difficult for the teachers. Another example is on delivering material, if the teacher did not use interesting ways in teaching writing for instance, it could make students felt frustrated in learning English. Actually, when learning English, some students were enthusiast, but there were still some students who did not follow the activities seriously. The teaching learning process in the class was guided to do the exercise because without guidance they would not do it. Moreover, students group work sometimes took a lot of time allocation and teacher had to pay attention to the students to understand the material.

The students tried to write a paragraph but they are usually copying the example. Therefore, in order to teach writing to the tenth graders of senior high school, the teacher has to use a suitable strategy which is matched with the learning objectives and make students learn the material easier. Moreover, in

Curriculum 2013 the learning process has supposed to use scientific approach to all subjects. Students are invited to give reason, ask and try. Each subject is interrelated and supported. Besides that, learning environment needed something interesting to motivate students to learn more and increase enthusiasm of students in learning English.

In conclusion, specific strategy of teaching writing could be applied to overcome the problem. There are some teaching writing strategies, one of them is RAFT strategy. RAFT stands for Role, Audience, Format, and Topic. RAFT is one of writing strategies that is believed to be able to help students understand their role as a writer, to choose the audience for their writing, to use a certain writing format and to determine what kind of topic they will take for the writing. By using RAFT strategy, students have opportunity to explore many different discourse forms and to use various formats for their writing exercise (Ruddell, 2008).

RAFT is an interesting writing strategy that helps students to write. This strategy also gives opportunity for the students to experience in a creative and interesting way of writing. In Indonesia, some researchers had used this strategy to solve problems in writing at junior and senior high school level. Therefore, this research will try to use the same strategy about using RAFT to improve the tenth graders' writing ability on descriptive text at SMKN 1 Demak in the academic year of 2018/2019.

## **1.2 Reasons for Choosing Topic**

The research entitled “The Effectiveness of Using RAFT Strategy to Improve Students’ Writing Ability on Descriptive Text: a Case of the Tenth Graders of SMKN 1 Demak in the Academic Year 2018/2019” is chosen based on the following reasons:

1. Students have low motivation in learning writing especially in descriptive text, so a teacher needs to use an interesting strategy in teaching writing.
2. The students also have difficulty in developing their idea in writing, so a teacher must find a systematic strategy that students can organize the ideas and explore their writing well.
3. The use of RAFT strategy can be an effective way to teach writing in descriptive text to the students of senior high school.

## **1.3 Research Question**

In relation to the explanation above, the question which needs to be answered in this research is: Is the use of RAFT strategy effective to improve the tenth graders’ ability in writing descriptive text of SMKN 1 Demak in the academic year 2018/2019?

## **1.4 Objective of the Study**

Based on the question above, the objective of the study in this research is to find out whether using RAFT strategy is effective to improve the tenth graders’

ability in writing descriptive text of SMKN 1 Demak in the academic year 2018/2019.

### **1.5 Hypothesis**

According to Arikunto (2006), hypothesis is a tentative answer to the problem of research until it is proven by the data collector. Based on objective of the study, the hypotheses of this research are:

$H_0$  represents the state of the status quo, or condition that is now believed to be true, or a statement based on theory or concept (Berenson et al, 2006). In this study, the  $H_0$  predicts that there is no significant difference in the tenth graders' writing ability of descriptive text between the students who are taught by using RAFT strategy and those who are taught by using another strategy.

$H_1$  is the opposite of the statement  $H_0$  or represents the claim or suspicion of the researcher against the possibility of improper status of the status quo or current conditions as part of the research objectives to be achieved (Berenson et al, 2006). In this study, the  $H_1$  predicts that there is a significant difference in the tenth graders writing ability of descriptive text between the students who are taught by using RAFT strategy and those who are taught by using another strategy.

### **1.6 Significances of the study**

The significances of this study are divided into two parts. Those are:

1. Pedagogical Significance

Hopefully the result of this research can help and motivate students to become more active learners in writing skill and can be used as one of strategies for teacher in teaching writing.

## 2. Practical Significance

- a. For the students, the result of the research are expected to improve their writing ability in descriptive text, besides that the students can be more motivated in learning writing descriptive text.
- b. For the teacher, the result from this study hopefully can be an input for teachers to apply various strategies including RAFT to provide the better strategy in writing descriptive text.
- c. For the future researchers, this research has a purpose to stimulate other people or researchers to replicate for further investigation about this certain issue. Moreover, this research can also be a reference for the following similar research.

### **1.7 Limitation of the Study**

This study focuses on using RAFT strategy to improve students' writing ability on descriptive text. The treatment only will be done to the students of X MM 1 of SMKN 1 Demak in the academic year 2018/2019 as the experimental class.

## **1.8 Definition of Key Terms**

### **1. Writing**

According to Massi (2001) writing is a transmission process of ideas from an addresser to an addressee via a text.

### **2. Descriptive Text**

Writing descriptive text is a kind of the text to describe something, someone, or place. Descriptive text has two main parts, they are identification and description. Descriptive text also describes about animals, fruits, etc. (Mukarto, 2007)

### **3. RAFT Strategy**

RAFT is a writing strategy that helps students understand their role as a writer and how to effectively communicate their ideas clearly so that the reader can easily understand everything written. In this strategy, student explore their writing based on various roles, audience, formats and topic (Fisher&Frey, 2007)

## **1.9 Outline of the Study**

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 is Introduction of the study consists of the Background of the Study, the Reason for Choosing the Topic, the Research Question, the Objectives of study, the Hypothesis, the Significances of the Study, the Limitation of the Study, the Definition of Key Terms, and the Outline of the Study.



Chapter II is Review of Related Literature which contains the Writing Descriptive text, Understanding of Descriptive Text, Concept of RAFT Strategy, Review of Previous Study.

Chapter III is Research Method which consists of the Research Design, the Subject of the Research, the Variable of the Research, the Instrument of the Study, the Validity of the Test, the Reliability of the Test, the Procedure of the Study, the Technique of Data Collection, and the Technique of Data Analysis.

Chapter IV is Research Findings and Discussion which consists of the Description of the School, Description of Subjects, Instrument Validity and Reliability, Pre – Test Data Analysis, Treatment, and Post – Test Data Analysis, and the Discussion of the Research Findings.

Chapter V is about conclusion of what have been discussed in the previous chapters and suggestion that are proposed to support the teaching and learning process especially in writing descriptive text.