

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem

English is a very important language. In our school, English is learnt as a foreign language. The students are expected to have skills in English that involves of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, students do not master the four English skills very well, especially in writing skill. Based on School -Based Curriculum/Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (Depdiknas: 2006) the students should be able to communicate oral and written text, by using English, in form of descriptive, narrative, anecdote, analytic exposition and hortatory exposition text.

Raimes (1983: 76) stated that writing is a skill in which we express the ideas, feelings, and thoughts which are arranged in words, sentences and paragraphs using eyes, brain, and hand.

Since writing narrative text as one goals of KTSP 2006, this research was done to find out students' ability in writing narrative text. A narrative text tells a story. Oshima says that narrative text describes a sequence of events or tells a story; in other words, narrative describes an experience. For example, fables, fairy tales or personal experience of a particular incident which happened to a person. In fact, this objective is very hard to achieve. The students often get difficulties to express their ideas into words or sentences.

Based on the preliminary test that was held at the second year students of SMA Negeri 1 Lampung Selatan, the researcher found that many students could not express their idea smoothly in written form, although they had been given the topic to write narrative text. They

found some difficulties, they could not arrange the sentences and expand their story chronologically, the students were not able to construct sentences in past tense form. Some of students did not pay attention in using punctuation, spelling, and capitalization. It is also supported by the result of the preliminary test. It shows that students' average score in writing in both classes was 57.56 and 56.56. It means the score of students' writing narrative text is still unsatisfactory from the standard score in writing. In addition, the ordinary teacher still taught writing in conventional way and seldom uses media and technique or method in teaching writing. Consequently, the students would easily get bored in writing class and thought that writing was difficult activity to learn.

Besides that, writing test is not included either in semester test, UN (National Examination) or even in SMPTN (National University Entrance Examination) so that makes students lack interest in writing and get low knowledge of how to write. Consequently, the students are not able to compose some texts, especially to write narrative text. Actually students know or have ideas of what they are going to write but they do not know how to put them into words (Dirhayono 1990).

Since writing is considered difficult to be mastered by the student, the teacher must be creative in teaching, by using suitable method or finding effective material for writing class, in order to make students interested in learning writing. In this case, in implementing the KTSP it is suggested to apply Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) to teach writing. Owens (2002) states that Contextual Teaching Learning is teaching that enables students to reinforce, expand, and apply their academic knowledge and skills in variety of in-school and out-of-school settings in order to solve simulated or real-world problems. By reason that CTL is a method of teaching and learning, it can help teachers relate subject matter content to real world situations, support the students in expressing their ideas, opinion or experiences that they are going to discuss in writing and motivates students to make connection between knowledge and its application to their lives that learning requires.

In addition to this, the philosophy underlying CTL that was based on John Dewey's research emphasizes on students' interest and their current experiences. In this case the need to relate the subject material taught at schools with the students' real-life experience is absolutely needed since it will be very beneficial for students. It is also supported by the research findings of the previous research by Ratna (2005) which shown that CTL improves students' ability in writing descriptive text significantly by CTL. In addition, Elly (2008) in her study case also stated that CTL improves students' ability in writing descriptive text in SMPN 1 Ambarawa. Ashuri (2003) stated that students would learn well if what he/she is learning closely related to what he/she has known and activities or events around him/her. Thus, the teaching learning at schools should always involve students' real world and experience to make them aware of benefits of their learning.

Considering the background above, the researcher applied CTL method to improve students' ability in writing narrative text. This research is different from previous research by Elly and Ratna because in here the researcher focused on the narrative text in terms of unity and coherence. The researcher infers that by CTL, teacher can create a natural environment in a classroom and also with the teacher' role as an organizer, facilitator, and motivator will make the students feel relax and engage the students active in learning. The learning environment is created naturally here. Furthermore, CTL gives the student time to practice and to reflect themselves. CTL puts the students as the center of an active learning process. Hopefully it can overcome the students' problem and also improve their ability in writing narrative text.

1.2 Formulation of the Problem

Based on the background of the problem above, the formulation of the problem can according arranged like the following:

- In general, is there any improvement of students' ability in writing narrative text after they are taught by Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL)?
- Specifically, is there any improvement of students' ability in writing narrative text in term of 1) content, 2) grammar, 3) form, 4) vocabulary, and 5) mechanic?

1.3 The Objective of the Research

- In general, the objective of the research is to find out whether there is improvement of students' ability in writing narrative text after they are taught by CTL or not.
- Specifically, to find out whether there is improvement of students' ability in writing narrative text in term of content, grammar, form, vocabulary, and mechanic or not.

1.4 Uses

The Uses of the research are:

1. Theoretically, it may support theories that Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) can be applied in teaching English, especially in writing Narrative text.
2. Practically, it may inform English teachers that Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) can give some benefits as to improve the students' achievement especially in writing narrative text.

1.5 Scope of the Research

This research was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Lampung Selatan. The population and sample of this research were the second year students. Based on the School-Based Curriculum/KTSP 2006, narrative is one of texts which should have been mastered by senior high school students. Hence, this research was focused on improving students' ability in writing narrative text through CTL. In this research there were two topics of narrative text, they were stories about Cinderella and The Turtle and The Rabbit. The students' writing will be evaluated

based on content, organization, vocabulary, grammar and mechanics. The tests were given twice; pre test and post test. The materials were taken from the English Book for SMA based on KTSP 2006.

1.6 Definition of Terms

There are some terms used by the writer and to make it clearly, the writer will give some definition as follow:

1. Writing is one of language skill in which the students learn how to get ideas and expresses the ideas in written form by applying grammar, vocabulary, mechanics and organization.
2. Text is any meaningful stretch of language either oral or written in the form of word, clause, and sentence.
3. Narrative text is a story telling which has correlation with an event or sequence of events. It has three important qualities: it tells an event, it generally describes events in chronological order, and makes it point.
4. Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is a method in teaching and learning that relates subject matter content to real world situation and motivates students to make connection between knowledge and its application to their lives.
5. Conventional Method is the ordinary method that teacher always used in the teaching and learning process.