I. INTRODUCTION

A.   Background of the Problem

As it is stated in basic competence of School Based Curriculum or KTSP (Depdiknas:2006), writing is one of the language skills that has to be mastered in studying English besides listening, speaking and reading. Therefore, the students are expected to be able to express their ideas in the written form.

Writing is a crucial part in teaching learning English. Writing involves a systematic way of thinking. This means, the relationship between thinking and writing make writing as a valuable part of any language courses (Raimes 1983:3). It is a complex process involving the ability to communicate in foreign language and the ability to construct text in order to express one's ideas effectively. Thus, increasing students' achievement in writing has always been the top concern of any English teachers especially in senior high school level. In fact, there are only few students can reach up to this level of skill. As Wulan Sari (2008:3-4), she showed that many senior high students could not express their ideas smoothly although they had been given topic to write. It seems that they have difficulties in expressing their ideas eventhough they know what to be written.

It is also supported by Riska Gustiawan (2011:2) states that most students in senior high school, where she did her three-month training program and research, find difficulties in writing. They are unable to compose several related sentences.

All those problems happen because writing is a complex skill in language learning process that must consider two main aspects; they are linguistic and non-linguistic aspects. Linguistic aspect involves grammar and vocabulary. On the other hand, non-linguistic aspect includes mechanics and form (organization).

Based on researcher the pre-observation at SMAN 5 Bandarlampung, it was found that most of the students from the first year of the school still have difficulties in producing a descriptive text. There are only 61.86 % students from the first year of the school was not good enough in writing text. Therefore, it was difficult to the students to express their ideas clearly in a form of descriptive paragraph writing.

Seeing this phenomenon, the researcher identified some factors that may cause students' problem in writing text. First, students' confused in using the appropriate tenses. They were afraid of making mistakes and they have less of confidence in writing. Automatically, the students lack knowledge in writing English. Second, some of them were still difficult in developing the content of descriptive text. Therefore, it makes them difficult to write their ideas clearly and smoothly. Third, some of the students were less attention in mechanic aspects. Some of them made a frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paraghraphing, poor handwriting so that the meaning confused and obscured.

Referring the explanation above, Wilkins (1983:4) said that students' learning depends on the effectiveness of the teacher's techniques and prepare the interest material. The English teacher also needs to be creative in preparing material and

creating such new techniques. Therefore, the use of various teaching techniques is necessary for motivating students to learn English, as well as for adjusting the material and avoiding the students' boredom.

Considering those factors, researcher tried to implement a method in order to encourage the students' writing skill. As a result, the researcher did a collaborative classroom action research in order to improve the students writing ability and get them better in writing achievement by implementing a method that called TBL. There were some benefits doing classroom action research. First, it helped the teacher to get the teaching learning process better. Second, it was one of education modernization, because in classroom action research, the teacher tried to change and improve by implementing an approach or method in teaching learning process. Therefore it could construct a teaching learning model that was appropriate to the condition and characteristic of the class in order to overcome the problems.

However, this collaborative action research is in based on Ferrance (2000:10), who states that collaborative action research may include as few as two teachers or a group of several teachers and others interested in addressing a classroom or department issue. This issue may involve one classroom or a common problem shared by many classrooms. These teachers may be supported by individuals outside of the school, such as a university or community partner. Therefore, the researcher conducted this research by collaborating with the English teacher at the school to see how TBL is effective to improve the students' activities during the teaching-learning process and students' writing ability.

Various influential experts such as Prabhu (1987), Nunan (1989), Willis (1996) and their definitions for tasks are presented in a chronological order as follows. Prabhu (1987:24) defines a task as "an activity which required learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process". Meanwhile, according to Nunan (1989:10) uses the word 'task' instead of 'activity'. He defines a task as "a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form". He suggests that in all definitions of tasks, one can see communicative language use where the learner focuses on meaning instead of linguistic structure. On the other hand, Willis (1996:18) suggests the use of tasks as the main focus in language classrooms, claiming that tasks create a supportive methodological framework. According to her, tasks remove teacher domination.

Thus, a teachers' role are nothing more than a guide whereas students' roles are highly active. In brief, the use of tasks in EFL teaching seems to be the primary need to engage students actively in the learning process. In the field of language teaching, the approach which is currently best known in this respect is TBL. TBL became a new teaching method that has been broadly adopted in language classroom. As with content-based instruction, the task-based approach aimed to provide learners with a natural context for language use. As learners work to complete a task, they have abundant opportunity to interact with each other as well as the teacher and the content. Such interaction is thought to facilitate language acquisition, as learners have to work to understand each other and to

express their own meaning. By so doing, they have to check to see if they have comprehended correctly. In addition, at times, they have to seek clarification from other students or their instructor.

Task-based language learning was defined by Breen (1987:23) as 'any structured language learning endeavor which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake the task.' In this view, 'task' is assumed to refer to all kinds of work plans that have the overall purpose of facilitating language learning, from the simple and brief exercise type to more complex and lengthy activities such as group problem solving or simulations and decision making (Wesche and Skehan, 2002).

Like many other innovations, task-based learning is linked to educational mainstream by its close relationship with experiential learning. Willis (1996:1) presents a TBL approach where tasks are used as the main focus of the lesson within a supportive framework. She holds that "the aim of tasks is to create a real purpose for language use and to provide a natural context for language study."

According to Willis (1996 pp.52-65), TBL consists of the pre-task component, the task cycle component, and the language focus component. The components of a task are goals and objectives, input, activities, teacher's role, learners' role and settings. Task-based language learning (TBL) focuses on the use of authentic language and on asking students to do meaningful tasks using the target language. Assessment is primarily based on task outcome (in other words the appropriate completion of tasks) rather than on accuracy of language forms. This makes TBL especially popular for developing target language fluency and student confidence.

If teachers can make language in the classroom meaningful therefore memorable, students can process language which is being learned or recycled more naturally. TBL offers the student an opportunity to do exactly this. The primary focus of classroom activity is the task and language is the instrument which the students use to complete it. The task is an activity in which students use language to achieve a specific outcome. The activity reflects real life and learners focus on meaning; they are free to use any language they want.

In the task-based lessons, the aim is to create a need to learn and use language. Some feel that teachers have a responsibility to enrich their students' language when they see it is necessary but students should be given the opportunity to use English in the classroom as they use their own languages in everyday life. The aim of TBL is to integrate all four skills and to move from fluency to accuracy plus fluency. The range of tasks available offers a great deal of flexibility in this model and should lead to be more motivating activities for the learners.

Concerning the classroom's problems, the researcher conducted a colaborrative classroom action research to find out an appropriate method to overcome the problems that occured in the classroom and to make a better improvement of students' writing ability of writing descriptive text by TBL. So that, by integrating TBL with systematic approach to grammar through writing, it hoped that it will answer the previous question and fit to the students' needs of learning English for fluency and accuracy.

B.   Formulation of the Problem

Refering to the background of the problem explained above, the problem will be formulated as follow:

1. How does the Task Based Learning improve the students' participation in writing class?

2. How does the Task Based Learning improve the students' writing achievement?

C.   Objective of the Research

Based on the formulation of the problem, the objectives of the research are:

1. To find out how Task Based Learning can improve the students' participation in writing class.

2. To find out how Task Based Learning can improve the students' writing achievement.

D.   Uses of the Research

The uses of this research are as follow:

1. Theoretically

   The result of this research is expected to find out this approach can work properly in improving the students' writing achievement.

2. Practically

   This research is expected to be applied for English teachers, students, and curriculum developers.

a. Teachers

Through this research, teachers can apply Task Based Learning as one of strategies in improving students' writing achievement.

b. Students

The implementation of Task Based Learning in this research may take the students actively involving in students' writing skill especially in grammatical structure, so that there will be number of students who have good grammar later.

c. Curriculum developer

Curriculum developer may take place in order to make a curriculum for improving students' writing by involving and intergrating the use of Task Based Learning.

E.   Scope of the Research

This research will be in form of Action Research. There are many types of action research, such as an individual research, collaborative action research, and school-wide research. Yet in this research, the researcher used a collaborative action research. The researcher did the reseacher by collaborating with the teacher at SMAN 5 Bandarlampung. The subject of the research was class X.9, the first year students, of SMAN 5 Bandarlampung. The researcher focused on the implementation of TBL in improving students' writing achievement. The material that used is based on School Based Curriculum for first grade of SMAN 5 Bandarlampung. This research only focused on one type of the text, which is descriptive text. The students' achievements of descriptive text writing through

Task Based Learning (TBL) that evaluated based on content, organization, vocabulary, grammar. As the action research, this research was done in two cycles.

F.   Definition of Terms

In this research, the writer used some definition of key terms as stated below:

1. Writing is a skill in which we express ideas, feelings and thoughts, which are arranged in words, sentences and paragraphs.

2. Task-Based Learning is an approach of teaching EFL that presents a three stage process; a pre-task component, a task-cycle component and a language focus component (Willis, pp.52-65).

3. Action Research: A research, which can be done by teacher and researcher, and allows both teacher and researcher to investigate events to take constructive step toward solving immediate problems and systematically reflecting on the outcome.

4. (Eileen Ferrance 2000: 10) states that collaborative action research may include as few as two teachers or a group of several teachers and others interested in addressing a classroom or department issue. This issue may involve one classroom or a common problem shared by many classrooms. These teachers may be supported by individuals outside of the school, such as a university or community partner.

5. Minimun Standard Score (KKM): score that has been decided by the teacher and should be achieved by the students to show their learning achievement.

a continuing process of discovering how to find the most effective language for communicating one's thought and feelings that enhances language acquisition as learners experiment with words, sentences, and larger chunks of writing to communicate their ideas effectively and to reinforce the grammar and vocabulary which they learn in the class (Belo's, 1997:135).

Writing is productive skills which is very important for students to learn. It is frequently used to convey the idea in communicating with others. Writing becomes the highest skill to be achieved after listening, speaking, and reading. Myles (2001:3) defined writing as an act of communicating ideas into written form by using knowledge of the language. Writing also involves composing, which implies the abilities either tell a piece of information into a form of narrative or description, or to transform information into new texts. However, the writing skill can not naturally be acquired; it is usually learned or culturally transmitted as a set of practice in formal instruction settings or other environments. Writing skill must be practiced and learned through experience (Myles, 2001:1).

According to School Based Unit Curriculum (KTSP), the goal of teaching and learning at Senior High School is that the students must be able to develop communicative competence in written as well as in spoken form to achieve functional literacy level. They are expected to be able to communicate in written as well as in spoken form to solve problems in their daily life. In this curriculum,

G.   Formulation of the Problem

H.   Objective of the Research

I.   Uses of the Research

J.   Scope of the Research

K.   Definition of Terms

That is not to say that there will be no attention paid to accuracy, work on language is included in each task and feedback and language focus have their places in the lesson plans.

Playing a game, solving a problem or sharing information or experiences, can all be considered as relevant and authentic tasks. In TBL an activity in which students are given a list of words to use cannot be considered as a genuine task. Nor can a normal role play if it does not contain a problem-solving element or where students are not given a goal to reach. In many role plays students simply act out their restricted role. For instance, a role play where students have to act out roles as company directors but must come to an agreement or find the right solution within the given time limit can be considered a genuine task in TBL.

Meanwhile, the main advantages of TBL are that language is used for a genuine purpose meaning that real communication should take place, and that at the stage

where the learners are preparing their report for the whole class about their findings in spoken or written form, they are forced to consider language form in general rather than concentrating on a single form as in the PPP approach (presentation, practice, production) model. Whereas the aim of the PPP model is to lead from accuracy to fluency, the aim of TBL is to integrate all four skills and to move from fluency to accuracy plus fluency. The range of tasks available (reading texts, listening texts, problem-solving, role-plays, questionnaires, etc) offers a great deal of flexibility in this model and should lead to more motivating activities for the learners.

Elsewhere, David Nunan have suggested that tasks can be conceptualized in terms of the curricular goals they are intended to serve, the input data which forms the point of departure for the task, and the activities or procedures which the learners undertake in the completion of the task. Two important additional elements are the roles for teachers and learners implicit in the task, and the settings and conditions under which the task takes place (Nunan, 1989).

Task Based Learning (TBL) was popularized by N. Prabhu while working in Bangalore, India. Prabhu noticed that his students could learn language just as easily with a non-linguistic problem as when they were concentrating on linguistic questions. Major scholars who have done research in this area include Teresa P. Pica and Michael Long. Prabhu stands as the first significant person in the

development of TBL. His maincontribution has been raising awareness of the ELT world to TBL.

The Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics provides a more pedagogically oriented characterization. Here, it is suggested that a task is any activity or action which is carried out as the result of processing or understanding language (i.e., as a response). For example, drawing a map while listening to a tape, listening to an instruction and performing a command, may be referred to as tasks. (Richards, Platt, & Weber, 1985, p. 289). The value of tasks, according to the authors, is that they provide a purpose for the activity which goes beyond the practice of language for its own sake.

A similar characterization is offered by Breen (1987) who suggests that a task is any structured language learning endeavour which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake the task. 'Task' is therefore assumed to refer to a range of workplans which have the overall purpose of facilitating language learning—from the simple and brief exercise type, to more complex and lengthy activities such as group problem- solving or simulations and decision making (p. 23).

Although the L2 acquisition and pedagogy literature (Ellis, 2003; Long, 2000; Nunan, 1989; Prabhu, 1987; Skehan, 1998) defines *task* in different ways, most studies agree that the crucial feature of tasks is their focus on the communication of meaning. For pedagogical contexts, researchers (e.g., Bygate, Skehan, &

Swain, 2001) have defined a *task* as "an activity, susceptible to brief or extended pedagogic intervention, which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective" (p. 11). As summarized in recent reviews (Ellis, 2003; Skehan, 2003), using tasks as the basis for language learning has been motivated by two main theoretical perspectives in L2 acquisition theory: the psycholinguistic approach and the sociocultural approach.

Proponents of the psycholinguistic approach have claimed that task-based interaction facilitates L2 development by bringing together input features, learner-internal capacities, and language production (Gass, 2003; Long, 1996; Mackey, in press), and have explored how task characteristics and conditions affect learners' allocation of attentional resources during task performance (e.g., Robinson, 2001; Skehan & Foster, 2001). Researchers working within the sociocultural approach (Lantolf, 2000; Swain, 2000) have argued that task-based interaction encourages interlocutors to co-construct meaning by contributing aspects of language to the conversation in ways that allow for the appropriation of new knowledge and the consolidation of existing knowledge. Although these theoretical approaches differ in terms of their underlying assumptions about the processes of L2 learning and the role of social and cognitive factors in those processes, they both acknowledge the benefits of task-based language learning.