

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. background of the problem**

Language is a means of communication through which people communicate or express their feeling and thought to others by the use of conventionalized sign, gestures, sound, or mark having understood meaning. People listen, read, speak, and write something through language. Communicating with other people means understanding and talking to them, reading what they have written and even writing to them (Raimes, 1983). These four skills always go together in learning a language none should be left if someone really wants to master the language.

English is the world's most important language, spoken by many people all over the world either as first, second or foreign language in Indonesia, English is a foreign language that has been taught from elementary school until university. There are four skills in English teaching learning process. They are reading, speaking, writing and listening. The students are expected to be able to communicate both in written and spoken forms.

According to School-Based curriculum (Depdiknas, 2006:313), the objective of teaching learning at junior high school is that the students must be able to develop communicative competence in written as well as in spoken to achieve functional literacy level. They are expected to be able to communicate both in spoken and

written form to solve problems in their daily lives. In this curriculum, the English material is taught based on the text. One of the English texts writing skills that students at the first year of junior high school have to study is descriptive text. The students have to be able to understand and produce a descriptive text cohesively based on the social function and generic structure of the text. The students are expected to be able to write descriptive text at least 10 sentences.

According to school-based curriculum, the objectives of teaching and learning process in writing skill for the first year of SLTP on second semester are:

1. The students are able to arrange sentences into procedure and descriptive text in daily activities context.
2. The students are able to use grammar, punctuations and vocabularies correctly in the text.
3. The students are able to identify the main idea and the generic structure of the text.
4. The students are able to produce a simple procedure and descriptive text.

Writing besides spoken form, is also very important for students to learn since it is one of productive skills, which is frequently used to convey the ideas in communicating with others. Having the ability to compose and integrate information is surely essential for the writer in order to make the readers understand the language being used in written communication. Bell and Burnaby quoted by Nunan (1989: 36) point out that writing is a complex activity where writer is required to demonstrate the control of content, organization, grammar, vocabulary and mechanic.

In reality, most of student's skills are far away from their learning target. They still have problem to relate all sentences in the paragraph with the suitable generic structure of the text. This is in line with Crimmons' statement (1997: 2). The students still need a long time to figure out how to organize and make their paragraph readable and effective. Kennedy (1997: 2) also figured out that the difficulties of foreign language learner in writing is that the students found it difficult to starts even though they have got idea on their mind and it seems that they could not elaborate their idea in written form.

Furthermore, Dharyono (1990: 1) confirms that the students know or have the ideas of what they are going to write but they do not know how to put them into words. Many students complain that they do not know how to write and they can not link sentence into coherent ideas. For instance, the students found difficulty in constructing a good sentence. The mistake is not only in grammar but also in choosing suitable vocabulary that had been taught.

There are some problems that the researcher found based on the result of interview with the teacher that may cause the problems, among others are listed as follows:

1. The students find difficulties in developing their ideas into a good text. They hardly find another idea in developing the topic being discussed. One of the factors of this problem might be an inappropriate technique used by the teacher.
2. The students find difficulties in using the appropriate grammar when writing the text. They often write the text in their native language structure

(Indonesia), especially when writing a phrase. Perhaps, it is because the teacher seldom gives modeling before giving a task.

3. The students find difficulties in using the suitable generic structure of the text. They often write the generic structure of the text in randomly, unarranged, and not suitable with the rules of the text. It might be caused by lacking of reinforcement given by the teacher when explaining the text.
4. The students are lack of vocabularies. They do not have enough vocabularies in their mind so that it takes too much time in finding the words by dictionary. Perhaps, it is because they seldom do such kind of vocabulary task so that they get low amount of vocabularies.
5. The students find difficulties in using the appropriate verbs in writing the text. They tend to use verbs incorrectly when writing the text. They tend to write the verbs in English the same when writing a sentence in their native language (Indonesia). Perhaps it is because they seldom do such kind of exercise related to sentences building.
6. The students are passive. They have low motivation in learning English. Since they feel difficult in mastering English, English become a kind of “something frightening” in their mind. Their major problem is that their incapability in understanding the text. Perhaps, it is because the teacher seldom gives group work or gives stimulus question.

For those reasons, the researcher wants to figure out one of the ways to solve those problems. In this research, the researcher focuses on the students' difficulties in developing the idea into a good text, in which by using Word Field Card Game

as the technique, it can be ease the students in writing descriptive text. Therefore, the students will be easily find and develop the idea of the topic being discussed.

Wilkins (1983:14) said that students' learning depend on the effectiveness of the teachers' techniques. Therefore, the uses of various teaching techniques are necessary for motivating students to learn English, as well as for adjusting the material and avoiding students' boredom. By mastering a good technique the teacher will be able to perform well in the teaching learning process and simultaneously will be able o achieve the target.

Djaja (1985:4) also states that one of the objectives of education is to encourage the students' motivation which certainly needs the technique and media that interest the students to explore their knowledge in learning the target language.

Games, as one of techniques used in language teaching, gives practice in all skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and all stages of learning or teaching sequences (presentation, repetition, combination, free use of language and for many types of agreeing, explaining, etc).

Many researchers have proved that games can enliven the learning task and motivate students to perform better. Meier and Batt (1981:78) conclude that game playing seems to be more effective than the traditional method of instruction in fostering positive attitude changes towards the subject being taught. It means that games can stimulate interest and participation in a course because of the constitution of form of play and recreation.

To develop students' ability in descriptive text writing by using Word Field Card Game, the researcher would conduct a Classroom Action Research to develop students' ability in descriptive text writing. Classroom Action Research is a continual process of search of a formal organization for devising solution for the everyday difficulties of classroom life (Mc. Niff, 1995). Furthermore, according to Angelo (1993), Classroom Action Research is a way for instructor to discover what works best in their own classroom situation, thus allowing informed decision about teaching. It means that action research is used to solve the problem in daily classroom activities in order to make teaching-learning process effective.

From the explanation above, this research is interested in using games to develop students' descriptive text writing ability, and the Classroom Action Research will be used to know whether by applying Word Field Card Game in teaching-learning process can develop students' ability in descriptive text writing. Therefore, the researcher conducts the research entitled Increasing Students' Descriptive Text Writing Ability through Word Field Card Game at the first year students of SLTPN 1 Hulu Sungkai.

## **B. Formulation of the Problem**

In reference to the background above, the researcher comes to the question as follows:

Can Word Field Card Game increase the students' achievement in writing descriptive text?

### **C. Objectives of Classroom Action Research**

The objective of Classroom Action Research is to find out whether Word Field Card Game can increase students' achievement in writing descriptive text.

### **D. The Uses of the Research**

#### 1. Theoretically

- The results of this research may support and extend the theories that games can be applied to teach descriptive text and to be used as a reference in the future research.

#### 2. Practically

Hopefully, this research can be useful to the following addressed:

- The teacher:
  - The results of this research can be used as information and guidance for English teacher that games can be applied as one of alternative techniques in teaching descriptive text writing in which it will give significant effect for teaching.
  - It may inform English teacher on how to teach descriptive text writing by using word Field Card Game and Classroom Action Research as the way to solve the daily problems in teaching-learning process.
- The students:

The treatment given in the Classroom Action Research can increase the students' descriptive text writing ability.

## **E. Scope of the Research**

This research will be conducted at SLTPN 1 Hulu Sungkai. Based on School-Based curriculum, a descriptive text is one of the texts that should be mastered by the first year students of Junior High School. Hence, this research is focused on developing students' descriptive text which is treated by Word Field Card Game as a technique in teaching descriptive text. The researcher focuses on the students' difficulties in developing the idea of the topic being discussed. Here, the students guess the picture or words states on the card which related to the topic discussed. After finding all the clues based on those cards, the students are asked to write those clues in the complete sentences into descriptive text. The materials of descriptive text are based on School-Based Curriculum of Junior High School. In this research, the researcher will use Classroom Action Research as research procedure. Based on the interview with the teacher, the students face some problems in writing descriptive text; they also get low score in writing the text. In this research, the researcher will focuses on the problems of students' difficulties in developing the idea of the topic being discussed. To collect the data, the researcher will conduct the writing test for the students and the observation in the class to see the effectiveness of teacher's explanation by using observation sheet. The students' achievement of descriptive text writing will be evaluated in relation to generic structure of the text, content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanic.

## **F. Definition of Terms**

1. Writing is a skill in which we express ideas, feeling, and thoughts which are arranged in words, sentences, and paragraph.
2. Text is any meaningful stretch of language either oral or written in the form of word, clause, and sentence.
3. Descriptive text is a composition that consists of series of sentences that develops the main idea that makes the reader sees a verbal picture. It also conveys the physical or abstract image of person, place, events, ideas, and object.
4. Games is a kind of teaching aids used in language teaching sequences. It can enliven the learning task and motivate students to perform better.
5. Word Field Card Game is a combination between guessing game and word games. It is a combination-use between games and pictures in which the students guess the pictures or words state on the cards.
6. Classroom Action Research is a way for instructor to discover what work best in their own classroom situation, thus allowing informed decision about teaching.