I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter reveals several points explaining the reasons for conducting this study. It consists of the background of the problem, formulation of the problem, the objective, uses, and scope of the research. In order to avoid misunderstanding, definitions of terms are provided in the last part of this chapter.

1.1 Background of the Problem

Since English is selected as the international language, its role as a tool of communication becomes more important in modern society. Consequently, people need to learn English at school, from elementary school to senior high school and even in university. Teaching English means teaching students not only about how to speak, how to read, and how to listen, but also how to write. It follows that the students are not only expected to speak English fluently but they also expected to be able to master the four language skills; listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four skills are interconnected and associated each other. If the students need to master English, they must develop the four skills.

Learning English implies learning how to communicate. Communication can be done not only in spoken but also in written form. Writing is a productive skill which is very important for student to learn. Writing will help students master the other language skills. Students sometimes feel afraid and shy to speak what they

want to say but they can tell it into a draft or writing before speaking. Thus, if students are having problem in expressing the idea, they can write it down.

In fact, writing is still considered a complicated skill for students to master because it involves a complex activity requiring a variety of skills. Students must have the ability to generate ideas, determine the purposes, develop arguments, organize and manage the text effectively, and revise. Byrne (1988:4) says that writing is difficult for most people both in mother tongue and in foreign language. It was noticed that students did know what they were going to write but they did not know how to put them into words. When their teacher asked the students to make a composition, they were confused about expressing their ideas in written form (Wahyudin, 2012:2).

Furthermore, Idrus (2003:3) states that although English has been learnt for many years, we still find that senior high school graduates cannot understand and use English well both in spoken and written form. Many students complain that they have the ideas what they are going to write but they do not know how to put them into a paragraph coherently. They cannot link several sentences into one coherent idea.

Rianto (2010: 51) has found that most students didn't compose in a well-organized composition and also they made it in a poor language use. Actually the students already had good content but they got problem about how to organize and

develop the idea in the composition. Below is the example of paragraph produced by a student:

> "**hai** my name is Adnin Aderiska **And u**[SP] can call me Adnin. I live in Haeba Street Pengadilan tinggi agama No.1[(PUNC.)] I have one sister. She is **college** [WC] in universitas Hasanuddin Makassar **my sister old 20 years old** [VT] I love my sister.And next time I want to **college** [WC] in Makassar too.
> I am a man**, my school is SMA 9 Kendari**) [(PUNC)]**my class in X1**[VT]. I like my class**.**[(PUNC)] **because they want to** real friendship[(unclear meaning)] **to me** and nice **wit** [SP] **all. Every in class we play and study together** [GR]"

Rianto (2010: 51)

Based on the paragraph cited above, there are two major mistakes the students made, i.e., Language use and organization. In language use, the mistakes were underlined. It can be seen that the student did many mistakes from the beginning until the end of the sentences. For the organization aspect, this student did not write the composition based on the generic structure of descriptive text, i.e. introduction, description or even conclusion.

In addition, based on researcher's pre observation in MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung, the researcher found that the students had problem in writing a text they have difficulty to express their idea smoothly. It is because the teacher teach them without using a good approach and treatment. The students were only asked to write a text based on the topic or picture in the text book without checking their ability in mastery aspects of writing first. Teacher did not give a guidance to the students when they are asked to make a composition. Because of that, the students couldn't understand about certain instruction of text for example the generic structure of the text, purposes and the language feature of the text. The researcher also found that the students could not make a good composition of writing

because they did not know how to make a good composition step by step. It is strenghtened by their daily score of writing. The score of their writing is mostly below 70 as the minimum Standard of Mastery Learning (KKM).

Therefore, the researcher is encouraged to take a close look these facts by doing a research on this matter. The researcher assumes that if teachers want to help the students to be a good writer in English, they must be able to teach writing effectively to the students in the classroom. Teaching writing is always related to how to give feedback directly or indirectly on writing in a good way, especially by the teacher.

Alghazo (2009:146) states that teaching writing is an important skill and a helpful activity to students if it is done in a way to give the students error feedback to improve their writings. Feedback sessions can be a beneficial experience for the student if the teacher shows strong points as well. This statement is also strengthened by Ferris (2002) who has found that students who were given error feedback from the teacher had greater self-correction abilities than those who were not given error feedback. Through feedback, teacher can help students to compare their own performance with the ideal and to diagnose their own strength and weaknesses.

There are two types of feedback that can be given to the students to improve their writing ability namely direct and indirect feedback. In this case, the researcher thinks indirect feedback is one of positive support that can be given by an English

teacher to their students in order to improve students' writing and minimize their errors. According to Rianto (2010:2) there are several reasons why indirect feedback is so helpful for the students' writing. Actually, direct feedback can be durable, but it will keep only in mind of receiver and will be lost in certain time. In contrast, indirect feedback, the thought and comment will be saved for a very long time in the memories; and it is more helpful on student's long term writing development than direct feedback (Ferris, 2002).

Based on the background of the problem above, the researcher is interested in improving students' descriptive writing ability through teacher's indirect feedback.

1.2 Problem

In reference to the background of the problem stated above, the researcher formulates the research problem as follows:

"Is there any improvement of students' ability in descriptive writing after the implementation of teacher's indirect feedback at the first year of MA Al-Hikmah Bandar lampung?"

1.3 Objective

In relation to the formulation of the problem, the objective of the research is to find out whether there is improvement of the student's descriptive writing ability after the implementation of teacher's indirect feedback or not.

1.4 Uses

1. Theoretically, it can support theory that teacher's indirect feedback can be applied to improve students' descriptive writing ability.

2. Practically, it can inform English teachers about teaching writing using teacher's indirect feedback as one of alternative steps in teaching writing.

1.5 Scope

The subject of the study is limited to the first year of MA Al-Hikmah Bandar Lampung. A class will be chosen randomly to be the sample . Specifically, this study investigates whether students' descriptive writing ability improve or not under teacher's feedback. The type of feedback provided is indirect feedback that will be given on students' writing. In this research, the learning materials will be focused in writing descriptive text. The treatment will be conducted in three times. All students' compositions will be assessed in terms of content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics. The scoring criteria will be adopted from Jacobs et al (1981:9). The materials are adopted from the School Based Curriculum/Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP) for Senior High School 2006. The topics wil be discussed by the students in writing desriptive text are *best friend* and *family member.*

1.6 Definition of Terms

In relation to the use of this study, there are some definitions clarified in order to have similar understanding. The terms can be described as follows:

Writing

It reffers to a process of communication that uses conventional graphic system to convey a message to the readers. This also means that writing is used for communicating one's idea in written form to readers, so that the readers can understand the information.

Students' descriptive writing ability

It refers to the students' competence in applying the components of writing were content, organization, vocabulary, language use (grammar) and mechanics.

Descriptive text

In this research, it refers to an essay which purpose is to describe a particular person, place or thing in detail. It consits of three parts : Identification, description, and reorientation.

Feedback

In general, it refers to information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of the learning task, usually with the objective of improving their performance.

Teacher's feedback

It refers to a feedback that is provided by teacher on student writing to support students' writing development and nurture their confidence as writers. Teacher

feedback often takes the form of written comments on their final graded compositions.

Indirect feedback

It refers to a feedback that is given to the students writing to indicates the location of the error by underlining, highlighting, circling, or giving a code without providing the correct form in order to give an opportunity to the students to realize their mistakes and fix it themselves. The code will be given based on five aspects of writing (content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics).

Teacher's indirect feedback

It refers to a feedback that is given by the teacher to the students writing to alert students to error by using general comments, and give students the opportunity to fix errors themselves.