

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Writing skill is known as a productive skill in English language learning. Writing is used as a communication tool to generate ideas into information. Writing skill is the ability and knowledge to express thoughts or ideas proficiently in written form. Moreover, writing involves the brain's activity to elaborate ideas, thoughts, and imagination into readable form. Additionally, writing has become the most important ability to be mastered in the educational element. The ability to write also teaches students to use pre-writing, drafting, and revising to produce a good writing product. The process of writing teaches the students to practice their ideas logically by exploring their minds to develop an idea into information. Thus, writers are required to have clear objectives in expressing and elaborating ideas to clearly convey information in written form.

According to Johnson (2008:203), writing is having, arranging, and communicating ideas. The ability to arrange and communicate ideas needs to be created critically. Specifically, critical thinking allows the brain to produce ideas freely and criticize in developing the ideas into well-structured writing products. The power of critical thinking is needed in writing since the writers are inventive and come up with lots of interesting new ideas. According to Harmer (2007:112), writing is used as an *aide-memory* or practice tool to help students practice and work with the language they have been studying. Indeed, it means learning that writing helps students to think critically in developing and elaborating ideas into good writing. Moreover, through writing, students also learned to communicate their own ideas, opinions and feelings in a written form.

Additionally, writing is difficult to master by the students because they need to arrange words together to develop ideas. According to Hyland (2003:15), writing is the most important skill for second language students to develop. To become a good writer, students must keep practicing writing by considering the sense of grammar, spelling and punctuation to make a good writing product. Significantly, they have to do their best to logically organize the ideas and grammatically arrange sentences so their writing can be easily and clearly understood. Furthermore, Harmer (2004:257) states that in writing, students should focus on the product and process of writing. In brief, learning to write requires students to practice their perseverance and patience to develop their writing skills.

In accordance with the writing process, it presents an exploratory process; it is carried out in a series of steps, not all at once. Students generally cannot find what they want to write about until they explore their thoughts in writing. In other words, to get good writing, students need to practice putting their ideas, thoughts, and feelings on paper to generate the ideas into a writing product. Moreover, according to Hyland (2003:9), writing is a way of sharing personal meaning, and writing courses emphasize the power of individuals to build their views on a topic. Consequently, the writing process leads students to think independently to explore their ideas in meaningful writing. Significantly, teaching writing needs to be considered since writing is an act of finding meaning and a willingness to participate in student statements. Thus, it is essential to enrich their thoughts in generating and organizing the ideas into a well-written paragraph.

Based on preliminary observation, some seventh-grade students in SMPN 5 Mengwi struggled to write a good paragraph, especially generating and developing their ideas in descriptive paragraphs. In addition, they did not know how to arrange

the paragraph well into a unified and coherent paragraph. Significantly, they also faced problems constructing a descriptive paragraph based on the correct format, punctuation, and mechanics. Afterwards, it affected the students' low scores in writing paragraphs, and they had a minimum chance to practice writing due to less interest in writing. Teachers should provide an appropriate teaching technique to help the students feel motivated to write a good paragraph. Therefore, teachers should use an interesting technique to provide the students with an enjoyable learning process; thus, writing a paragraph is not as hard as they thought.

Based on the interview with one of the English teachers in SMPN 5 Mengwi, the teacher used a monotonous technique and just focused on teacher-centered learning, where the students could not express their knowledge proficiently. In addition, this teaching technique only focused on the teacher as the domain of the learning sources. The students did not experience the new learning outcome to support their needs, especially in practicing their writing skills. Usually, the students were asked to write a paragraph without giving clear instructions and attention to the paragraph structure. However, they became less active and passive. In brief, the learning situation was not as enjoyable as they were expecting. Therefore, they easily forgot the learning materials, which affected their scores, and they still had difficulties in writing well-arranged and organized paragraphs.

The teacher still used monotonous teaching to focus the learning and teaching process. It made the students unable to express their ideas and thoughts, especially in writing. It was because they were always taught using the same technique. Thus, it could not lead students to practice their writing skills and improve their capability in exploring their writing knowledge. Besides, the teacher did not try to combine the teaching technique with any media to improve the new

learning atmosphere and bring new learning experiences. Therefore, it caused the students to get bored and lack enthusiasm in following the teaching-learning process. Additionally, it could decrease their critical thinking in organizing a paragraph. Therefore, their capability to achieve the learning objective is also considered based on the technique in the teaching-learning process.

To solve the students' problems, the researcher found an interesting and effective teaching technique to help them generate and develop the ideas into good paragraphs using Roundtable Combined with Picture. Roundtable is categorized as a group work strategy where the students work cooperatively. Roundtable could be combined with several media; one of them is a picture. In addition, a picture could help the students visualize the object of the picture in vivid detail into an idea and develop the object critically in a written form. According to Harmer (2001:135), pictures are extremely useful for various communication activities, such as describing and drawing. In brief, pictures assist students' creativity and accommodate their interest in expressing ideas.

Roundtable Combined with Picture promotes team-building skills and creates an enjoyable learning atmosphere. Roundtable Combined with Picture expects students to interact with others most in their teamwork. Moreover, students are required to contribute ideas to their team to create an anticipatory set during a lesson. This teamwork also enriches students' bond tolerance with their team. Every student should try to elaborate many ideas from others into one major objective. Thus, students' brainstorming increases to promote critical thinking in organizing different ideas from others. Roundtable Combined with Picture helps students produce well-arranged paragraphs by sharing their ideas and thoughts and engaging with the picture to generate them into a good paragraph.

According to the explanation above, the researcher was interested in implementing Roundtable Combined with Picture to improve the students' descriptive paragraph writing skill. It was clearly mentioned that the technique would solve their problems, especially in writing a unified and coherent paragraph and generating and organizing their ideas into well-arranged paragraphs. Thus, implementing Roundtable Combined with Picture was a good solution. The researcher believed this technique could improve the students' writing skills and scores. Therefore, the researcher conducted this study entitled "Improving Writing Skill of the Seventh-grade Students of SMPN 5 Mengwi in the academic year 2023/2024 Through Roundtable Combined with Picture."

1.2 Research Problem

Formulating a research problem was important in conducting this research to make a specific discussion. As what has been stated in the background of the study, there were still difficulties faced by the seventh-grade students of SMPN 5 Mengwi in writing. The students also did not know how to write unified and coherent paragraphs based on the writing criteria. The situation happened because they only had limited chances to practice writing. Thus, the problem faced should be immediately overcome using an effective technique and media. Therefore, the researcher formulated the research problem as follows: can writing skill of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 5 Mengwi in the academic year 2023/2024 be improved through Roundtable Combined with Picture?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The research problem that has been previously formulated should be answered by conducting a scientific investigation. The objective of this study was

intended to find out the solution of the problem faced by the seventh-grade students of SMPN 5 Mengwi in the academic year 2023/2024. Based on the research problem mentioned above, the writing skills of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 5 Mengwi needed to be improved. Therefore, this study was conducted to find out the solution to the problem faced by the seventh-grade students. Furthermore, the objective of this study was to find out whether or not writing skill of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 5 Mengwi in the academic year 2023/2024 could be improved through Roundtable Combined with Picture.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

To avoid broad discussion, it was important for the researcher to limit this research. The researcher limited the study to improving writing skill of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 5 Mengwi in the academic year 2023/2024 through Roundtable Combined with Picture. It was important for the researcher to know the curriculum that was applied in the school to produce an appropriate teaching module and the learning material to improve the students' writing skill. Furthermore, in this study, SMPN 5 Mengwi applied the Merdeka curriculum. According to the curriculum, the researcher focused on the learning objective in the writing and presenting phase to measure the students' writing skills.

The researcher focused on the objective of the present research in accordance with what has been learned in school, acting effectively and creatively, and using methods according to scientific principles. Moreover, the researcher focused on the writing and presenting phase, which required the students to communicate their ideas through simple, organized paragraphs. In this study, the researcher focused on producing a written paragraph based on a descriptive

paragraph's generic structure, social function, and language features. Furthermore, this study focused on students' writing skills in describing a thing and person. Therefore, the paragraph should fill the scoring rubric criteria used that involved the aspects of format, punctuation and mechanics, content, organization, and grammar and sentence structure.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is important. It refers to the contributions and the impact of this study on the research field. Significantly, the researcher explains briefly the perspective of the research discussion. Furthermore, this study focused on improving the writing skill of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 5 Mengwi in the academic year 2023/2024 through Roundtable Combined with Picture. In addition, the findings of this study were expected to give theoretical and practical information on implementing Roundtable Combined with Picture in teaching writing. Both theoretical and practical significance are crucial to make sure that this study would bring beneficial impacts. Thus, the theoretical and practical significance of this study could be elaborated as follows:

Theoretically, the findings of the study were expected to be beneficial as the theoretical witness to the implementation of theories based on the problem faced by the students. The findings of this study were also expected to be beneficial for the next researcher in the future study as guidance and references. In addition, the findings of this study were also expected to support the existing empirical evidence for the next researcher. Moreover, the theories of the working principles and knowledge of English language teaching could be useful as guidance in improving students writing skill by implementing Roundtable Combined with Picture.

Additionally, the researcher expected that the students and teachers could improve the teaching-learning process. These findings could disclose further research areas, especially in foreign language acquisition. In summary, theoretically, the result of this study was expected to be useful to other researchers.

Practically, the research findings were also expected to provide educational feedback for the teachers, students and other researchers. For the teachers, the study was expected to be used as a reference for the teachers to select the most effective and beneficial technique to improve the students' writing skills. For the students, the research findings were expected to improve their motivation and interest in learning writing. This teaching technique was expected to motivate them to express their ideas in writing skills and gain interesting experience in learning writing skills. Lastly, for the other researchers, references and empirical reviews are expected to conduct a better study in the same field. Thus, it purposed to get better and more accurate results in improving writing through Roundtable Combined with Picture.

1.6 Definition of Key Term

The title of this study was "Improving Writing Skill of the Seventh-Grade Students of SMPN 5 Mengwi in the Academic Year 2023/2024 through Roundtable Combined with Picture. Defining key terms was crucial to gaining a better understanding of this study. Moreover, to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation among the readers of this study, it was important for the researcher to give clear information about the key terms used in this study. Operationally, the researcher defined the operational definition of writing skill and Roundtable Combined with Picture of this study as follows:

1. Writing Skill

Writing skill is operationally defined as the skill of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 5 Mengwi to construct a simple descriptive paragraph about a person and thing contextually. In addition, the paragraph should consist of 6 – 12 sentences and follow the generic structure of a descriptive paragraph, such as identification, description and conclusion.

2. Roundtable Combined with Picture

Roundtable Combined with Picture is operationally defined as the technique used to improve the writing skill of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 5 Mengwi in which the teacher makes a group of 4-5 members, and the teacher gives the students a pen and a piece of paper. The teacher first presents a picture as the topic of the paragraph. The first student then writes the first sentence on the piece of paper and rotates the paper to the student on his/her left. Next, the student continues writing on the piece of paper. The group continues rotating the piece of paper and pen until they finish the paragraph.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

The theoretical review is a scientific review of the theories discussed in this study based on the experts' points of view. Theoretically, it strengthens this study as the foundation for conducting scientific research. Furthermore, the theoretical review is purposed to provide clear and accurate information or knowledge about the study to support understanding of the research problem. The theoretical reviews are aimed to guide the researcher in conducting and determining this study. Therefore, the theoretical main theory frameworks discussed in this chapter are as follows: writing skill, descriptive paragraph, Roundtable Combined with Picture, and assessing writing. They could be explained as follows:

2.1.1 Writing Skill

Writing is one of the language skills that students must learn. Writing skills are considered fundamental in this global era. It enables the writers to communicate to the readers in written form. Generally, it is often used in school, at work, and in writers' personal lives. According to Brown (2004:218), today, the ability to write has become an indispensable skill in the global literate community. Therefore, at least at rudimentary levels, writing skills are necessary for achieving employment in many walks of life and are simply taken for granted in the literary culture. Therefore, writing is crucial for students to learn, and teachers should pay attention to students' writing skills when teaching English.

Writing skill is described as a process that is the stage a writer goes through to produce something in the final written form. Furthermore, Broughton et al.

(2003:116) state that the act of writing differs from that of talking in that it is less spontaneous and more permanent, and the resources available for communication are fewer because the writers cannot as they do in conversation interact with the listeners and adapt as they go along. For this reason, writing conventions tend to be less flexible than those of conversation, and the language used tends to be standardized. Therefore, writing should be taught and given attention in writing a paragraph, especially in teaching English.

Furthermore, according to Wallace et al. (2004:15), writing is the final product of several separate acts that simultaneously are hugely challenging to learn. These separate acts include notetaking, identifying a central idea, outlining, drafting, and editing. Moreover, young and old people can encounter the discouraging 'writer's block' if they simultaneously engage in more than one or two of these activities. In addition, Hyland (2003:3) adds that learning to write in a foreign or second language mainly involves linguistic knowledge and vocabulary choices, syntactic patterns, and cohesive devices that comprise the essential building blocks of text. Furthermore, writing is marking coherent words on paper and composing paragraphs to make it flow smoothly. Writing can also record their thoughts, feelings, and personal things about their ideas. Therefore, the writing processes could enrich their capability to use critical thinking to practice their writing skills.

Writing is never a step action; it is an ongoing creative act. Writing needs a long process to full fill criteria of good writing, such as the format, punctuation and mechanics, content, organization, correct grammar and sentence structure. According to Richards and Schmidt (2002:592), writing is viewed as the result of complex planning, drafting, reviewing and revising processes. Some approaches to

teaching foreign language writing teach students to use these processes. Moreover, the writing process guided the students to be critical in developing and elaborating the writing product in every step to gain good writing skills. In addition, Oshima & Hogue (2007:15) state that writing has roughly four steps: pre-writing, organizing, writing, revising, and editing. Therefore, teaching writing needs to be concerned with creating good writing skills to achieve an excellent writing product as the result of their learning.

Writing is hard to master because writing is different from speaking. Harmer (2004:255) states that written text differs from spoken text since it has letter, word, and text formation issues manifested by handwriting, spelling, layout, and punctuation. Unlike speaking, writers cannot directly see and give additional explanations when the readers do not understand the writing. Moreover, writers cannot show gestures and facial expressions to make readers understand the ideas they want to convey more than they can in speaking. Writers have to make their writing easily understood by using functional punctuation, choosing appropriate words, organizing ideas in logical order, and using correct grammar.

Generally, writing skills are difficult to master because students do not have clear and stable thoughts to organize their ideas. Science writing takes the process of developing their ideas into good writing products. However, Graham (2008:2) states that writing is a complex skill requiring considerable effort and time. As students move towards middle-high school grades, writing becomes more complex. Afterwards, the teacher must take responsibility in teaching the writing process to develop their skill at each grade level. Moreover, in teaching writing, a teacher must expend significant attention toward teaching writing as they expect students to learn how to write and produce good writing products. A clear direction will direct

students clearly to the objective of writing. Therefore, the teacher must guide the students and provide writing instruction as clearly as possible.

Urquhart and Mclever (2005:3) state that writing is a process of explanatory that benefits and content area. Writing requires students to arrange and organize their ideas into clear and understandable paragraphs. Furthermore, students and teachers will be pleased if they can successfully develop and organize their ideas into good written products. Through writing, students can practice exploring and developing their ideas and transfer them into written form with correct grammar and punctuation, fulfilling the element of writing itself. However, the writing process takes more time to master the writing skill, but as the students practice well, their writing skills will improve. Thus, writing must be an oriented process and not only product-oriented.

Writing has become an important skill because, through writing, students learn about the sound of language through visual symbols. According to Patel and Jain (2008:125), writing is a kind of linguistic. Moreover, writing is an essential feature of learning a language because writing provides a way of correcting vocabulary, spelling, and sentence structure. Additionally, writing is a way of growing. In writing, students exercise their minds and create ideas, then grow them as a written product. As students practice and grow their skill, their writing ability does so. Furthermore, it becomes crucial in the middle-high school grades that they must be taught and practiced well. As practicing is efficiently acquired for the students, in practicing writing, students also parallel the other skills. Therefore, writing provides students with an excellent learning experience.

In summary, writing is an essential feature of learning a language because it provides very good means of vocabulary, spelling, and sentence patterns. Writing

ability is an ability that the students in the education element should master to develop their ideas critically through written form. Based on some theories mentioned above, the researcher uses the theory from Oshima & Hogue (2007:15), which mentioned that writing has roughly four steps to produce a good writing product: pre-writing, organizing, writing, and revising and editing. These steps should be procedurally conducted to produce a well-written paragraph. In brief, the theory used was relevant to support this study because it was about improving the students' paragraph writing.

2.1.2 Descriptive Paragraph

Students are required to make written products since writing is an important skill that should be mastered, especially when writing a paragraph. According to Zemach and Islam (2005:9), a paragraph is a group of about six until twelve sentences about one topic. It means that sentences support the main topic that would be described. A paragraph can provide information, give an opinion, explain something or tell a short story. The sentences should describe the topic clearly in specific detail and explanations. Thus, it would let the readers easily catch the paragraph's meaning. Therefore, when the writers can arrange the paragraphs appropriately and clearly, the readers will easily understand what the writers will tell the readers through their writing.

A paragraph is a group of related statements a writer develops about a subject (Oshima & Hogue, 2007:3). The first sentence states the specific point or idea of the topic, and the rest of the sentences in the paragraph support that point. That means a descriptive paragraph has one topic to be discussed. Moreover, the other sentences in the descriptive paragraph are called supporting sentences. It

consists of more information about the topic, specific details, and an explanation of the topics. The last is the conclusion as the closing of a paragraph. It usually shows the writers' feelings. In brief, it is assumed that a paragraph is a group of sentences explaining and discussing the main point based on the topic sentence.

Descriptive paragraphs are paragraphs that describe places, things, and people. Furthermore, according to Oshima & Hogue (2007:61), a descriptive paragraph tells how something looks, feels, smells, tastes, and sounds. Moreover, writing descriptive paragraphs takes experience and involves the five senses, which include eyes, heart, ears, skin, and taste, in collecting clear information about the object that is going to be described. In addition, write descriptive paragraphs that describe people, places, or objects so that the reader can imagine them in his mind. A descriptive paragraph commonly describes an object, things or others that are going to be explained and involves a clear and complete explanation of the topic.

A descriptive paragraph is used to express or describe the object in clear detail so that the reader can imagine the object that will be described. The structure is divided into three stages: introduction, main body, and conclusion. Identification usually tells about the general structure of the paragraph, and the writer writes some statements that show the object to be described. Furthermore, the main body or description talks about the descriptions of the object, physical appearance, and characteristics in specific detail. The last is a conclusion, summarizing the paragraph or the writer's comment about the object. Based on Oshima & Hogue (2007:61), a description usually follows an organizational pattern in spatial order. Spatial order is the arrangement of things in space.

Furthermore, Oshima & Hogue (2007:61) state that a good description is a word picture; the reader can imagine the object, place, or person in their mind. Thus,

specific details should be sufficiently elaborated to create images in readers' minds. Additionally, Kane (2000:351) states that description deals with visual experience and perception of the object; thus, it aims to explain how the object looks, sounds, and tastes, giving a clear picture. Hence, readers can clearly imagine the object through ink on the paper. In other words, words play a central role in replacing the object. Therefore, describing something can make the reader understand the writer's message.

Additionally, Kane (2000:351) states that description is the sensory experience of how something looks, sounds and tastes. Mostly, it is about visual experience, but the description also deals with other kinds of perception. Description can give imagination and feel about something. Therefore, using a kind of sensory is very important in describing something. In addition, the readers will get more vivid information based on the descriptions. Afterwards, the reader will try to save and imagine the description of the object that will be read. Thus, they can easily imagine how the thing, place, or person looks in their mind. On the other hand, writing the details can be very tough since writers should consider themselves readers to know whether the details are clear or vague.

Generally, descriptive writing uses the word to build images in vivid detail for readers. Moreover, the readers can feel how the object that will be described involves the senses that come from the sights, sounds, smells, tastes or feelings. It can be assumed that the reader can get clear information about the object's appearance through descriptive paragraphs. Furthermore, a good descriptive paragraph is as easy to make the reader feel as if they are present in the scene. Specifically, a good descriptive paragraph must involve three points of the descriptive paragraph: introduction, body paragraph, and conclusion. The writer

introduces the object's general information related to the topic in the introduction. In the body paragraph, the writer explains the description of the object in detail and as clearly as possible. Lastly, in conclusion, the writer puts their final opinion about the description (Savage and Mayer, 2005:30).

In accordance with the theory above, according to Evans (2000:11), the generic structure of a descriptive paragraph is an introduction, main body, and conclusion. Moreover, the writers discuss the location, population, and reason in the introduction. The main point is the general information of the paragraph, whether it is about describing a place, person, thing or animal. Furthermore, the main paragraph is about the specific description. Lastly, the last part is a conclusion, a summary of the whole paragraph that involves the main topic from the introduction and the description in one paragraph. Thus, it ends the paragraph by mentioning how the writer feels, comments, or something that will be a recommendation about the whole paragraph.

According to the theories mentioned, the researcher uses the theory of Zemach and Rumisek (2005:25), which defines a descriptive paragraph as a paragraph that explains how someone or something looks or feels using adjectives and adverbs. However, the present study describes the points of descriptive organization. The organization is beneficial in guiding the students to write a well-organized paragraph. Regarding the theories mentioned, the researcher used the theory of Savage and Mayer (2005:33), which explains the three essential points in a descriptive paragraph, such as an introduction or identification, a body paragraph or description and a conclusion. Therefore, all the theories are relevant to this present study, and they were relevant to support this study since they are concerned with improving writing skills in constructing descriptive paragraphs.

2.1.3 Roundtable Combined with Picture

Teaching techniques or strategies are required to make the teaching-learning process more innovative. To improve the students' writing skills in writing descriptive paragraphs, in this present study, the researcher chooses Roundtable Combined with Picture as the teaching technique. Roundtable technique is one of the cooperative learning strategies. Roundtable is a technique where the students take turns responding to a prompt by writing one or two words or phrases before passing the paper along to others who do the same. Roundtable is a useful technique to use in teaching writing. It can be a strategy that helps students criticize their ideas or thoughts about the topic and review it in a group. Thus, it is expected to give a different atmosphere in teaching-learning to create an enjoyable situation where the students can follow the teaching process smoothly.

Furthermore, cooperative learning is a model of teaching strategy to develop students' social skills to work together cooperatively. Arends (2012:361) defines cooperative learning as a benefit for both low- and high-achieving students to work together on academic tasks. In cooperative learning, higher achievers tutor the lower achievers to provide special treatment or help from peers who share youth-oriented interests and language in particular subjects. Furthermore, cooperative learning presents wider tolerance and acceptance for students to have the same opportunities to work independently on common tasks through cooperative learning. Arends (2012:361) adds that the important goal of cooperative learning is to teach students cooperation and collaboration skills. In addition, cooperative skills also promote the development of students' interpersonal skills.

In cooperative learning, Roundtable is categorized as a group work technique. In this technique, the students do their tasks in a group cooperatively.

Jolliffe (2007:03) defines cooperative learning as requiring pupils to work together in small groups to support each other to improve their learning and that of others. Working cooperatively with groups develops students' critical thinking skills and tutor communicative competence through social structure interaction activities. Moreover, Jolliffe (2007:03) adds that cooperative learning should consist of key elements, such as positive interdependence and individual accountability. Positive interdependence requires each pupil in a small group to contribute to the group's learning. Individual accountability means that each group member is accountable for completing his or her part of the work and requires each pupil to develop a sense of personal responsibility to learn.

Roundtable is a technique where the students take turns responding to a prompt or paper by writing one or two words or sentences before passing the paper on to others, who do the same in writing and responding to the prompt or paper. According to Kagan and Kagan (2009:6.34), Roundtable technique is when students take turns generating written responses, solving problems, or contributing to a project. In this technique, students have the same chance to write and develop their ideas with their team because every team member has an equal chance to write and generate the paper. In addition, Roundtable is a written version of round-robin brainstorming, which guides students to be more active and responsible in their group. This technique expects the students to have new learning experiences and motivation and help each other solve the problem. Besides, Roundtable improves their group work behavior and structuring their acquisition skill.

Kagan and Kagan (2009:5.2) state that Roundtable presents new challenges and requires new skills for the teachers and students. Additionally, the teacher must consider that all of the students contribute to their team by sharing their ideas or

thoughts with other students on the teamwork. Kagan and Kagan (2009:6.24) also define that Roundtable is used to improve interpersonal skills such as team building, social skills, and academic skills such as building and thinking skills. Kagan and Kagan (2009:14.12) add that Roundtable generates the anticipatory set, motivates students to learn the content and gets them “set” to learn. It means that Roundtable guides the students to be more active and have a new learning experience model. Roundtable is also appropriate for improving communication skills. Therefore, Roundtable technique enriches their social skills and team-building development.

Roundtable technique is an effective technique to make students express themselves to elaborate and generate ideas. Roundtable is designed for practicing writing skills in a group to develop their ideas and participate in the teaching-learning process. Additionally, students do not listen to the teacher’s explanation in the Roundtable technique. They have to explore their ideas and participate with their group. Thus, it is expected to practice students’ interdependence, accountability and brainstorming. In implementing the Roundtable technique, the teacher selected the students to make a group of four to five. The teacher provided one piece of blank paper and one pen for the team to write Kagan and Kagan (2009:10.21). Thus, without listening to the teacher’s explanation, each group member is responsible for the instructions given.

Moreover, to succeed in teaching-learning, media is one of the keys to the process. Media is important in teaching and learning since it helps students understand the material. There are a lot of media that can be used in the teaching process. One of them is a picture. According to Brown (2004:224), the picture focuses on familiar words whose spelling may be unpredictable. In addition, pictures contribute to students’ interest and motivation, sense of language in

context, and ideas. The role of pictures in productive skills can draw students' motivation and attention and make them participate more in learning; create contextualized language learning activity; raise interpretation objectively and subjectively; refer to responses to questions or as controlled practices; and stimulate and give information and dealing with conversation, storytelling, and discussion. In summary, pictures can stimulate the students' creative imagination and develop their ideas in writing.

Furthermore, according to Harmer (2007:178), the teacher can use picture drawings from books, newspapers, magazines, or photographs to facilitate learning. Picture is one of the very simple media because it can be used to engage the students and deliver language meaning easily. The pictures used in the media must be simple, clean, well-printed, and easily seen by the students in the learning and teaching process. Furthermore, a picture is crucial in teaching descriptive paragraphs to encourage the students to imagine the object in vivid detail. Additionally, pictures can also increase students' brainstorming and creativity. Nunan (2004:58) defines that many communication activities can be stimulated through pictures. Thus, pictures can lead students to extend their further understanding and give inspirational ideas in descriptive paragraphs.

In this study, the researcher used Roundtable Combined with Picture as a teaching technique to teach descriptive paragraph writing at SMPN 5 Mengwi in the academic year 2023/2024, especially for the seventh-grade students. Roundtable has several steps that should be conducted in simple ways in the teaching-learning process. Based on the theory, it concluded that the Roundtable technique has several values in its process, such as trusting each other, working together, solving any difficulties, and making a decision. According to Olsen and Kagan in Richards and

Rodgers (2001:251), the roundtable is a technique that involves pairs and small groups of learners in the classroom. Roundtable Combined with Picture steps in this study was adapted based on Kagan and Kagan (2009:6.34) and modified as follows:

- 1) The teacher provides a picture and thinking time for the students.
- 2) The first students write on a piece of paper and pass a piece of paper and pencil or pen to the students on his/her left in their group.
- 3) The second student adds their ideas to the piece of writing and passes the paper to the student on his/her left side.
- 4) The teacher asks the other students to repeat and contribute.
- 5) The teacher asks the students to continue rotating the paper and pen until they finish the paragraph.
- 6) The teacher asks the group members to recheck the paragraph.

2.1.4 Assessing Writing

The assessment is needed in the learning activity. However, many people misunderstand the test and assessment. They are both different. The test was prepared through an administrative procedure in which the students knew their ability would be measured. Conversely, Brown (2004:5) states that assessment is an ongoing process encompassing a wider domain. A teacher may assess their students only by giving responses, comments or questions. Richards and Schmidt (2002:35) mention that assessment is a systematic approach to collecting information and making inferences about a student's ability or the quality or success of a teaching course based on various sources of evidence.

Assessment is a general term that includes all procedures used to collect students' learning information. The assessment refers to the learning project

performance and provides students with valuable feedback on learning progress. In addition, Hyland (2003:212) defines that grades and assessment responses contribute greatly to individual student learning and effective and responsive writing lesson development. Thus, understanding the assessment procedure is crucial to ensure that instruction has the desired impact and that the students are assessed fairly. Additionally, observing the assessment's information conscientiously helps teachers identify the gaps between students' recent performance and goals to increase their development progress.

Assessment is the most important process in the classroom learning activity. According to McKay (2006:247), in the classroom assessment, many teachers assess formatively, informed by their beliefs about what writing is and how it develops in young foreign or second language learners. Furthermore, Weigle (2002:46) argues that the conceptualization of language use and ability into clearer focus for writing assessment is to introduce the notion of performance assessment. The assessment procedure involving either the observation of behavior in the real world or a simulation of a real-life activity is described by the term performance assessment. Through the assessment, the teacher can determine the teaching's strengths and weaknesses instead of measuring students' achievement.

Assessment focuses on assessing students' achievement and improvement during the learning process. Teacher assessment is an integral part of the teaching-learning process. In assessing writing, the teacher must consider the components that will be assessed. Brown (2004:221) states that the assessment of writing more common in genres may include criteria such as expected conventions for each writing, conveying purpose, goal or main idea, effective writing strategies, syntactic variety demonstration and theoretical fluency. Through these activities, teachers

continually learn about students' capabilities and achievements. This knowledge then informs plans for future work. This continuous process comprises the teacher assessment; it should not be seen as a separate activity.

The assessment of writing is an essential task to do. According to Mackay (2008:245), the construct of writing assessment might be determined by the curriculum and/or by the theory. It means that in constructing an assessment for students, the teacher must construct it based on the curriculum and learning objective. In assessing students' writing products, the teacher may use some theories from an expert to get clear criteria related to the assessment. The assessment is crucial in such an approach (Brown, 2004:247). It can be assumed that the purpose of assessment is not only to get a score but also to get closer to the students to enrich their writing ability. Moreover, it is important to consider the basic process in the early stages to give students the maximum benefits of writing assessments. Thus, it influences the instructional and assessment goals.

Additionally, Brown (2004:218) states that the assessment of writing is no simple task. The teacher must consider the objective of the writing assessment itself, and the writing criteria must be clear in assessing students' writing ability. Moreover, the teacher must pay attention to the objective that is going to be tested, and the aspects of the assessment must be clear enough. It means that each objective of writing can be assessed through various tasks. Generally, there are several types of writing performance, such as imitative, intensive, responsive and extensive. In addition, a paragraph is involved in the responsive level of writing ability. Therefore, the assessment task requires students to present a limited discourse level, connecting a paragraph into a paragraph and creating a logically connected sequence of two or three paragraphs (Brown, 2004:220).

Moreover, McCulloch (2007:4) states that assessment can provide feedback, promote learning, diagnose (at commencement, during or at the end, readiness to proceed, strengths and weakness), motivate and provide a profile of what has been learned. The assessment gives students maximum benefits and allows them to achieve their intended learning goals. In addition, Coffin et al. (2003:2) state that assessment is often a major purpose for students' writing. Generally, in writing assessments, students may be required to produce essay writing to demonstrate their mastery in developing the ideas. In assessing writing, the teacher must focus on the content and form of the writing itself: text structure, vocabulary, the construction of argument, grammar and punctuation. Thus, through assessment, students' achievement is examined directly from the learning outcomes.

In this study, the students were asked to produce a descriptive paragraph with a particular topic, and the researcher assessed the writing product. The scores result would be a requirement for whether the subjects' writing could be improved. Both students and teachers must know the scoring criteria. According to Oshima & Hogue (2007:195), teachers sometimes assign points for each writing skill when grading a paper. Additionally, the teacher uses a rubric to score a paragraph. Five essential criteria involved the writing scoring rubric. In brief, the writing criteria must be as clear as possible before constructing a well-written paragraph.

The variety in terms of the criteria chosen for writing assessment reflects a similar confusion among linguistics in their attempt to identify oral written proficiency scoring categories. In this study, the researcher planned to use two tests, a pre-test and a post-test, to assess students' writing skills. Furthermore, the researcher asked the students to write a descriptive paragraph based on the title given. To assess the students' writing skills, the researcher used an adapted scoring

rubric criteria from Oshima & Hogue (2007:196). The result of the test was scored using the scoring rubric. In the present study, the researchers focused on assessing the writing skill of seventh-grade students of SMPN 5 Mengwi in the academic year 2023/2024 in producing a descriptive paragraph by administering paragraph construction tests. The paragraph must consist of 6 – 12 sentences, and they must remember the scoring criteria to make a well-written paragraph.

2.2 Empirical Review

The empirical review was the review of previous research relevant to this research. The empirical review aimed to elaborate a deep understanding of the theories previously. It means that empirical review refers to reviewing previous studies done earlier by other researchers. In this study, the researcher wanted to improve writing skill of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 5 Mengwi in the academic year 2023/2024 through Roundtable Combined with Picture. Some relevant studies are summarized as follows:

The first similar study was conducted by Muchtar (2023) entitled “The Use of Roundtable Technique to Improve Writing Skill of the Tenth Grade Students of Ma Ruhul Amin Lamongan in Academic year 2022/2023”. The purpose of the study was to find out whether or not writing skill of the tenth-grade students of Ma Ruhul Amin Lamongan in the academic year 2022/2023 can be improved through the implementation of Roundtable as the teaching technique. Moreover, the results of this study showed that the students’ writing skill was significantly improved after implementing Roundtable technique. The subjects’ scores were changed and showed improvement from the pre-test to post-tests. In addition, the subjects could write descriptive paragraphs under his guidance, which affected their achievement.

The strengths of this study were the researcher provided well-related theories from experts to support the statements. Furthermore, the scoring rubric used was adapted from Oshima & Hogue (2007:196), which was very clear. However, the researcher explained different steps of the Roundtable technique in the lesson plan based on the theory used. Moreover, the researcher did not clearly mention the technique's steps on the lesson plan without stating when the Roundtable technique was used to practice the students' writing skill. Based on the lesson, it could be concluded that there was no writing practice activity on the research and no direct going to the post-test. Logically, it could affect the score and the students' capability, whether it improved or not. Thus, the students or the researcher cannot perceive the Roundtable technique's effectiveness in improving writing skills. Therefore, to improve the quality of this study, the researcher provided clear steps of Roundtable Combined with Picture adapted from Kagan and Kagan (2009). Furthermore, the researcher also provided clear instructions and learning activities for implementing Roundtable Combined with Picture to improve the students' writing achievement.

The second similar study was conducted by Natha (2019) entitled "Improving Writing Skill of the Seventh-grade Students of SMPN 11 Denpasar in Academic year 2018/2019". The objective of the study was to find out whether writing skill of the seventh-grade students of SMPN 11 Denpasar can be improved through Roundtable. Based on the test given to the subject, the results showed an improvement in the subjects' writing of descriptive paragraphs. It can be seen from the subject scores, which increased in each study cycle. Thus, after the treatment of Roundtable, the subjects' writing skills significantly improved, and the students' responses toward the study were positive.

The strengths of this study were the researcher provided well-related theories from experts to support the statements. In addition, the scoring rubric used was adapted from Oshima & Hogue (2007:196), which was very clear. However, this study did not use learning media to teach the subjects. Additionally, the researcher only mentioned several titles for the students to construct descriptive paragraphs without combining them with any media. Therefore, it was quite difficult for the students to use their brainstorming to elaborate and contextualize the topic without seeing what was being described. Concerning the previous study above, in this study, the researcher used pictures to engage students and give new learning experiences to increase students' critical thinking. Then, the researcher invited them to learn with pictures to make them understand what was written based on the title and media given.

