

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Most of the students, in fact, think that writing is complicated to study. Students always get difficulties when they are asked to write in English. Based on interviewing conducted on VIII-1 SMP Swasta HKBP Pardamean Medan , it was found that students' achievement in English subject is still low. It was proved by their achievement in writing.

In fact, in Indonesia students' writing skill in English language is very low. It is found that most of Indonesian students are still difficult in comprehending the text.

As generally, based on the standard competency in the syllabus of the second grade of Junior High School (*Sekolah Menengah Pertama : SMP*) called Educational Unit-Oriented Curriculum (*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan: KTSP*), students are expected to be able to write simple paragraphs in descriptive, recount, narrative, procedure and report. Descriptive text is a type of text that functions to describe particular person, place, or thing. Description creates a word-picture of people, places, objects, and emotions, using a careful selection of details to make an impression on the reader. Students who are going to write this type of text should be able to express what they see, hear, feel vividly.

As generally known, Minimum Mastery Criteria (MMC) of English subject in many schools is up 70. From the KKM above, the score is very high for many

schools. Because we found that student has difficult to write a text well based on the genre. Especially in writing descriptive, students face difficulties because of reluctance to question or less motivation, difficult to build and develop their ideas, the using of grammar and confuse in determining the generic structure of the text. The teacher just explained the material from the guiding book and after that asked the students to answer the question based on descriptive text that they have read. In Nasution (2008) said that the learning of language depends not so much on the number of years it is studied but on the motivation of the students, the type of teachers, method of teaching adopted, and instructional material designed.

There were many reasons that make the students' achievement low in writing. Students found difficulties to write because they do not have any idea to write, their grammar and vocabulary is not good, and also they are not confident use their own language. When someone wants to write for a specific purpose, they have to think who will be their audience and how provide the information the readers need to know in their writing.

The reason why students still got low achievement in writing is not only from students themselves, but also from teacher. The conventional learning strategy that teacher applied in teaching writing skill is not effective. During learning activities in the classroom, the teacher only asks the students to read the text, translate the text by using dictionary, and rewrite the translation. The students are not asked to practice their writing ability. In addition, the teacher never makes variation in teaching and learning process. This situation made the students' motivation in writing decrease.

So, teacher has high responsibility to improve students' achievement in writing. Teacher has to create interesting activities in the classroom so that students can develop their ideas in writing.

Based on the explanation above, the writer would like to conduct a study of applying the new strategy in teaching writing to the students especially for Junior High School students. The strategy is named mind mapping, which is developed by Buzan. The mind mapping strategy is one of the teachers' strategies in teaching. Mind Mapping are used to generate, visualize, structure, and classify ideas, solving problem, making decision and writing. Not only mind map show facts, but also show the overall structure of a subject and the relative importance of individual parts of it. It helps students to associate ideas, think creatively, and make connections that might not otherwise make. This strategy uses basic mental operations involved in perceiving, processing and evaluating information.

D, Kaur J & Singh K (2004: 95) Mind maps are excellent way to help learners organize knowledge, to empower themselves to better comprehend the key concepts, and principles in lectures, readings, or other instructional materials, found that relating images to concepts is a creative task which requires thinking instead of memorizing.

Olivia (2008: 8) Mind Mapping is very useful to improve students' achievement in studying because it has so many advantages. (a) helps students to

concentrate in memorizing information (b) improve students visual intelligence and observation ability (c) improve students creativity (d) summarize the lesson briefly, etc.

Mind mapping works well as the teachers visual design enables students to see the relationship between the ideas, and encourages them to group certain ideas together as they proceed. Students start with a topic at the center and then generate a web of ideas from it, developing and relating these ideas as their mind makes associations. Mind mapping is often created around a single word or text, placed in the center, to which associated ideas, words, and concepts are added.

Learning by using this strategy helps students develop good writing skills and also become better learners as they develop life-long skills that help them to study.

B. The problem of study

The problem of the study of this research is formulated as follow;

“Does the use of Mind Mapping Strategy improve the students achievement in descriptive writing?”

C. The scope of of the study

This study focuses on improving students achievement in descriptive writing. The strategy that is used to improve students writing skills is Mind Mapping Strategy. The scope of this study is limited on the teaching of descriptive writing.

D. The objective of the study

In relation with the background of the problem, the objective of the study is to investigate the application of mind mapping Strategy in improving the student's writing achievement in class VIII SMP Swasta HKBP Pardamean.

E. The significance of the study

The result of this study is expected to be used for:

- a. The students in motivating them to be better in descriptive writing.
- b. English teachers in providing them an alternative strategy in improving their strategies in teaching writing.
- c. The readers in encouraging and motivating them to write.