

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of Study

As one of the basic skills of learning English, writing is important in language learning process. Writing is considered a highly productive skill and arguably the most difficult of the four language skills. It is a process of putting ideas or thoughts into words which is combined into the form of paragraphs. In writing, ideas are arranged in series of sentences that are related to each other so the information can be comprehended. Through writing people can express their experiences, events and social identities. It also can train them to think critically and creatively. Writing helps us to remember, observe, think and communicate (Barras, 1995:9)

Harmer (2004:86) states “writing is a process that we write is often influenced by constraints of genre, and then these elements have to be present in their learning activity. Based on the English syllabus of curriculum, one of the genre learned in senior high school is descriptive text. Its purpose is to describe person, things, and places by using vivid details. Descriptive text is concerned with giving a clear information of what we experience based on the fact.

Eventhough students have learnt English for years, they still find it difficult in writing. They think that writing is difficult or even they are not interesting in doing it. Therefore, they did not give full attention and

enthusiasm in the process of learning writing. They had some ideas in their mind but they didn't know how to put it into written form, moreover they used to open their dictionary when they were going to write the text.

Based on the observation in SMAN 11 Medan, it was found that students had problems when they were asked to write, especially in writing descriptive paragraph. They were lack of motivation and ideas, lack of mastering vocabulary, and grammar. Those facts indicate that most of students are not able to write a simple writing.

Actually their lack of writing ability at school is influenced by the ways of teaching. In the process of teaching, teacher usually gives tasks from the textbooks, students answer the questions and submit them to the teacher. From this fact, it can be concluded that the process of teaching and learning has not been conducted successfully. It means that the teacher didn't concern with students' writing ability and teaching it in an interesting way. Therefore it needs to develop and apply the effective methods to enhance the students' writing skills.

In order to solve the problems, many methods and technique can be applied in teaching writing to make it effective and more interesting. One of the methods is cooperative learning type. By applying cooperative learning, students are more active because they will learn more through a process of constructing and creating, working in group and sharing knowledge. So they can enjoy the learning process and improve their writing skill.

A cooperative learning method is believed as being able to give chance for students to be involved in discussion, to encourage, to have critical thinking and to take responsibility of his/her own learning. Although it considers as an active role for students, it does not mean that teacher is not participating in the classroom. In the learning process, teacher should play some roles such as designer, facilitator, motivator and guide in the learning process.

Cooperative learning can be a lot of fun, planning the text together can be very motivating. Research by Storch, (<http://elt-resourceful.com/2013/01/14/collaborative-writing-activities/>) found that texts produced by pairs were shorter than those produced individually, but that they were better 'in terms of task fulfilment, grammatical accuracy and complexity. It appeared that the process of working together meant that learners were giving each other useful feedback as they went along, and thereby producing more accurate and complex texts.

A cooperative learning method has several types, namely Group Investigation, Students Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD), Teams-Games-Tournament (TGT), Team Assisted Individualized (TAI) and Jigsaw. One of the types chosen to be applied in this study is group investigation.

Group investigation is an organizational approach that allows a class to work actively and collaboratively in small groups and enables students to take an active role in determining their own learning goals and

processes. Group investigation method requires the students to form small interest groups, plan and implement their investigation, synthesize the group members' findings, and make a presentation to the entire class.

Group Investigation is appropriate to be applied in solving the students' problem because the students work on a task in group of two or more, that they are encouraged and motivated to help one another to learn (rather than being in competition with one another), that they are dependent upon the efforts of one another to achieve success, and that they are held accountable for that learning both as a group and as individuals (Killen, 1998:82)

Hence, based on the explanation above, it is interesting to conduct the research related to teaching writing descriptive text by Applying Group Investigation. It concerns to assist the students to improve their writing by actively investigating the phenomena and writing them down on a piece of paper.

B. The Problem of the Study

In line with the background of study, the problem of this study is formulated as follows: "Is there any significant effect of Group Investigation Method on students' achievement in writing descriptive text?"

C. The Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to find out whether there is an effect of applying the Group Investigation Method on students' achievement in writing descriptive text.

D. The Scope of the Study

This study is focused on students' achievement in writing descriptive text particularly on describing place. The level of students being studied is the first grade of Senior High School.

E. The Significance of The Study

The findings of the study are expected to be useful for:

1. The students to get more interested in writing class and to improve their writing skill.
2. English teachers in their attempts to improve their teaching strategies to motivate students learning.
3. Those who are interested in carrying out further research related to this study providing them with some valuable information needed.