

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

English in the era of globalization plays a very significant role. It is due to the fact that mostly people around the world require an international language. The fact indicates that English is one of the most popular used in all aspects of international communication, such as economic, politic, social, culture and education. Therefore, English in all countries is learned in schools.

In the case of Indonesia, English is also taught since Elementary level in most Indonesian schools up to the university level. The main aim of teaching English is to develop four language skills, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. Writing is one of the four language skills, which is related text-making activities: generating, arranging and developing ideas in sentences: drafting, shaping, rereading the text, editing, and revising (Gould, et.al. 1989: x). To produce a piece of good writing demands standard forms of grammar, syntax, and word choice. Besides, writing needs good mechanics, organization of paragraph, content, the writer's process, purposes, and mechanics.

In this case, in the process of the teaching of writing, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher often gets difficulties. For example, students have low motivation and poor ability in writing. It was proven by the score which derived by the students after learning writing I in the second semester. At that time, the average

score was 58.5. This reality was not matched with the expectation which has been formulated in GBPP of English Department of FKIP UMSU, where the standard score was 65. This condition was happened by the some factors. They did not enjoy study writing. In addition, most English teachers have so far used the traditional approach. Based on the researcher's experience, the EFL students frequently get difficulties in writing. Sometimes, there are many errors in students' writing. Some of them write fragments, run-on sentences, and misplaced modifiers. The students also have low motivation and are not interested in the writing class. Another difficulty is that they cannot manipulate the language well and they lack confidence. Most of them do not know what to say and if they do, they do not know how to say it. They are not able to organize their ideas accurately in the written form. In this case, they are confronted with the two main problems. They are content and expression.

Dealing with the problems above, the researcher proposes cooperative learning strategy as a model of teaching in writing class. It is assumed that this strategy is the best method to solve the EFL classroom's problem on writing and give benefits to learning process such as in motivating the students, improving social interaction in the classroom, creating a positive learning environment, and improving writing ability.

There are a number of reasons to conduct an action research on cooperative learning. First, the researcher wants to improve the students' writing ability using cooperative learning strategy in the writing class. Second, the implementation of cooperative learning strategy is expected to be able to overcome the students'

problem in writing class. In other words, cooperative learning strategy is expected to promote higher achievement compared with individual learning. Third, cooperative learning is effective in improving academic achievement, self-esteem, and relationship between peers. In addition, it gives a large opportunity for students to interact socially one to another within a group. It also provides opportunities equally to the whole class to learn. The bright and poor students can learn together and both are equally treated in learning process. Fourth, cooperative learning classes can create more relaxed and enjoyable classes. It provides chances for students to interact each other and it creates positive learning environment. Fifth, by applying cooperative learning, the students are familiar to solve the problem with each other. It teaches the students to help each other, build community in the classroom, and to teach the basic life skills, such as learning to hear other persons, appreciating others' opinion, communicating intensively, and working together to achieve the goal. In the cooperative learning classroom, students can socially share their ideas, knowledge, and strategies while learning process in-groups or pairs.

### **1.2 Research Problem**

Based on the explanation on the background of the study, the problem is formulated as in the following;

1. is the students' achievement in writing improved if taught by using cooperative learning strategy?



2. How cooperative learning strategy processed in improving the students' ability in writing?

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

Based on the previous problem, the objective of this researcher was having relation to the following aspects.

1. To improve the students' achievement in writing by using cooperative learning strategy.
2. To improve the process of learning writing by using cooperative learning strategy.

### **1.4 Scope of the Study**

This study is restricted to the implementation of cooperative learning approach in the teaching of essay writing. In a more specific focus, this study is concentrated on how to improve the students' ability in writing essays through cooperative learning strategy. It is aimed to develop the planning, the implementation, and the evaluation of the teaching of essay writing. The type of writing in this study is limited to writing expository essays. There are a number of reasons to limit on expository essays. First, since the subject of the study is the fourth semester student in which they are taking Writing II in this semester, the study enables to be conducted. Second, the course materials of Writing II cover expository essays. The class of Writing II is focused on writing various types of English essays: examples, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, classification, and process

analysis of expository essays. Third, the researcher is interested in writing expository essays, because it has various types of developments. By doing so, the students have more variety of development in writing expository essays. This study belongs to collaborative action research and it will be conducted at Muhammadiyah University of North Sumatra and more specifically to the fourth semester students of English Department of 2009/2010 Academic Year.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study has practical and theoretical significances, namely (1) Theoretically, the result of this study is expected to support the theory of cooperative learning in improving the students' ability in writing expository essays; (2) This study is also expected to give a practical contribution to writing lecturers with a model of cooperative learning in the teaching of writing expository essays at the college level. Later, they can adopt it as one of the ways to solve the similar problems in the writing class. They can have a better methodology in teaching and propose more suitable curriculum based on the research; (3) Practically, this study can also help the students to solve their problems in writing expository essays through cooperative learning strategy. They can apply more appropriate learning strategies of cooperative learning. By doing so, they are expected to be more active, enjoyable and motivated in practicing writing; (4) Practically, this study can also empower and enrich the EFL teacher's knowledge on cooperative learning strategy in the teaching of expository essays. The EFL teacher can develop cooperative learning strategy depending on the

situation of the EFL class and the capability of the students; and (5) This study also gives scientific contribution to the university, that is the development of a teaching strategy, in improving the teaching of writing and increasing the quality of learning English as a whole.



