

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 The Background of Study

Writing is one of the four language skills that should be taught to the students. Writing, in addition to speaking, belongs to productive skills. This skill should be mastered by the students because it can be used to express the students' ideas as well as feelings, and communicate with others. As Raimes (1983:3) stated, learning a second language means learning to communicate with other people in order to understand them, talk to, read what they have written, and write to them. In reality, writing, compared to other language skills, is considered as the most difficult and complicated language skill to learn (Cahyono, 1997). And also, Rozimela (2004:83), in her study on the teachers' perception of the teaching writing, found that the teachers have treated writing unfairly. It is because of some reasons such as a big class size, limited time, teachers' competence, and the requirement of the final examination.

Based on the writer's observation through conducting preliminary study during teaching learning writing activity in VIII/1 class at SMPN 2 Delitua, it was found that many students of VIII/1 class has difficulty in writing descriptive paragraph. It is proved by the result of the students' writing in preliminary study. On August 2013 the mean score of the students writing was 61.95, while the English Minimum Mastery Criterion- (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal-KKM) is 80.00. This result indicates that the students' writing achievement is still low. This

data is supported by the result of interview to the English teacher who taught them for 1 year when they were in class VII on Academic Years 2012/2013 at the second semester, the students writing`s score was 65.87, not so different from the mid-semester`s score on September 2013, that is 64.55. It shows that the teaching process or the method may be not a fixed way. And from the students` questionnaire given, the causes known that the students` difficulties come from the weaknesses of student ability in generating ideas; therefore they did not have ideas what to write first. Secondly, the students had difficulty in making the writing relevant with the topic. Also, the students had difficulty in choosing the word due to lack of vocabulary, Furthermore, The students tend to be bored and low participation in writing class because the process of teaching and learning activities was monotonous. So, to make the students can produce descriptive paragraphs, there should be an effort to make writing class more interesting.

In accordance to the writing itself, writing is one of four language skills that should be taught to the students. Writing, in addition to speaking, belongs to the productive skills. This skill should be mastered by the students because it can be used to express the students` ideas as well as feelings, and to communicate with others. Raimes (1983:3) states that learning a second language means learning to communicate with other people in order to understand them, talk to, read what they have written, and write to them. The writing is not only important language skill to be learned but it is also important to be taught. Accordingly, English language learners` success in acquiring the ability to write in a second

language depends to some extent on how the teachers are able to teach writing to their students.

In terms of teaching English in high school either junior or senior high school, the implementation of the Competence Based Curriculum (CBC), the teaching of writing has been put aside by the teachers. In her study on the teachers` perception of the teaching of writing. Rozimela (2004:83) found that the teachers have treated writing unfairly. It is because of some reasons such as the big class size, limited time, teacher`s competence, and the requirement of the final examination. Beside, the teachers did so because writing is believed to be the most complex skill to be taught (Cahyono & Widiati, 2006:139). It is considered to be the most complex skills because when we are writing, we are doing many things at the same time (Mason & Washington, 1992:31, cited in Rozimela, 2004:84). Along the process of writing we are applying our knowledge about grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. According to Cahyono & Widiati (2006:143), in the introduction of the 2004 English Curriculum, “writing seems to gain its momentum in secondary schools”. As a matter of fact, writing gets more chance to be taught more intensively.

In reality, if the writing is compared to other language skills, it is generally considered as the most difficult and complicated language skill to learn (Cahyono (1997). Then Sari (2007) states that isn`t look like to other three skills, writing is most passive as the teachers only have to instruct the students what to do, wait, and then collect their final drafts. It stands to reason that, for most teachers, writing is boring to teach and for teach and for students it is boring to learn.

Writing activities require some abilities such as grammar mastery, spelling, punctuation, and diction. Besides, it needs skills of planning, organizing, developing, and transferring ideas into a written form language. To eliminate the complexities of writing activities, the teachers need to develop their techniques in writing. Selecting appropriate approaches in the teaching of writing influences the atmosphere of the class. In addition, classroom techniques enable the students to write according to their personal needs (Ferris, 2002). Thus, as teachers, we should consider suitable approaches, methods, and techniques in English teaching and learning.

In the latest curriculum or the School-Based Curriculum, or the 2013 Curriculum, the goal of English teaching and learning process in Indonesia is enable the students to have proficiency in mastering the four language skills to communicate them in short and simple essay and monolog texts fluently and accurately to fulfill what they need in their daily life context (Depdiknas, 2013). That's why English teachers are responsible to grasp the goal of English teaching-learning processes in Indonesia. Then, it is also stated that the English lesson in Junior High School (JHS)/MTs is oriented to enhance the students' ability to understand and to create various kinds of short functional texts (genres) such as procedure (to record a procedure in conducting something), descriptive (to describe people, places, or things), recount (to tell a series of events happening one after the other), narrative (to tell a story to the other people), and report (to give information to an entity) (Depdiknas, 2013). This shows that the writing

which is taught and learned in high school must be based on genre or genre based writing.

Besides that, the teaching and learning process of writing in high school must also be presented in a such relevant way and technique so the students can easily understand how to learn write the writing itself. This means that teaching and learning writing needs a certain teaching and learning method or technique so that the process can learn optimally and finally the student can learn successfully. Teaching and learning method and technique plays important role during the process of teaching and learning.

In line with the teaching method and technique, the procedure of teaching which requires careful planning, teachers need to familiarize themselves with certain techniques of teaching writing that can entail the teaching of other language skills. And the techniques in asking students to write by using pictures, symbols and colors to represent ideas will result the writing products different from those written based on pure imagination. Moreover, applying mind-mapping as part of pre-writing activities will also result in pieces of written works different from those produced by writing directly out of mind. Thus, creating fun pre-writing activities in the writing class is important to make the teaching of writing more enjoyable and challenging for students, yet less stressful for teachers (Sari, 2007).

Based on the description, therefore, the title of this study is formulated as “Improving Students` Achievement in Writing Descriptive Texts through Mind-mapping.” The mind-mapping is the writing technique to develop their ideas

(learners) and write the words or phrases in circles or bubbles. Proett and Gill (in Seow, 2002: 316) defines that mind-mapping is a simple yet powerful strategy. Its visual character seems to stimulate the flow of association and particularly good for students who know what they want to say but just can't say it. It is also generally known that a Mind Map is a diagram used to represent words, ideas, tasks, or other items linked to and arranged around a central key word or idea. Mind maps are used to generate, visualize, structure, and classify ideas, and as an aid to studying and organizing information, solving problems, making decisions, and writing.

### **1.2 Problems of the Study**

Based on the previous explanation of the background of the study, the problems of the research are formulated as follows:

- 1) To what extent does the Mind-Mapping technique improve students' achievement in writing descriptive texts?"
- 2) How does the process of Mind-Mapping technique occur for teaching writing descriptive texts?

### **1.3 The Objectives of Study**

In relation to the research problem, this study has two objectives:

- 1) to know the improvement of students' achievement in writing descriptive texts taught through the Mind-Mapping technique.
- 2) to know the process of Mind-Mapping technique occurs for teaching descriptive texts.

#### 1.4 The Significances of the Study

The research is expected to provide some significances and benefits as follows:

1) Theoretically

The result of the study is expected to support the body of knowledge in writing descriptive text by using mind mapping. And this study is also expected to give practical contribution to writing text based on genre at the junior high school. Later, it can be adopted as one of the ways to solve the similar problems in the writing class.

2) Practically

The result of the research also can give input to improve their ability and competence in writing skill. The students will also learn how to write easily by using Mind Mapping technique.

For English teachers, it can extend and widen the insights and knowledge about the nature of Mind mapping model in teaching writing-especially the descriptive text. Then, it is also can be used as an optional teaching model for different type of writing

And also this study can give the view to the other researcher that the research has contribution in teaching writing. Then, it can be used as references and provide certain information and knowledge in order to conduct a research in a related topic.

Finally this research, is also used a kind of benchmarking knowledge dealing with writing teaching technique for the class.

### **1.5 The Scope of the study**

For the sake of reliability, validity, thick description of the research, and effectiveness of the research, this research tries to focus on genre descriptive text as product of writing, types of descriptive texts taught and learnt are in line with the descriptive texts available at Grade VIII SMP. Mind mapping technique is another way to get ideas to write about something and write them in circle or bubble, around the topic, as the theory stated by Houge(1996:91) that it will be applied in improving students` achievement in writing the text

