

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

English as a foreign language is important language that must be learned for students to communicate with teachers. Friends or even another person from a various countries. In indonesia, english is learned by students from elementary school up to senior high school. It is very important for students to master english in all skills. The skills are listening, speaking, writing and reading. Those skills are related to each other that must be mastered by the student as well as they have learned. In this case. The reasearcher is going to focus on writing skill. Writing become interesting to be taught since it is challenging to student. Writing is a language skill that plays an important role for students who are in process of learning a language.

Writing is one of the language skills in learning english that the student should master despite its difficulties considering the fact that there are some aspects needed to score in writing. According to sharples (1999) actually, writing is an opportunity;it allows students to express something about themselves. Explore and explain ideas. Student can convey their ideas in their mind by organizing them into a good text so that the others know them and they can think critically mastering vocabulary and tenses become the main key to get a good writing. We have to choose appropriate vocabularies and arrange words to be a sentence and develop it to be paragraph. Brown (2001) states that writingis thinking process,

because writing is a process of putting ideas down on paper to transform thought into words and give them. White and arndt cited in alves (2008) describe writing as a form of problem solving which involves such process as generating ideas, discovering a 'voice' with which to write, planning, goal-setting, monitoring and evaluating what is going to be written as well what has been written and searching for language with which to express exact meaning.

In language learning, English is taught starting from Elementary School to Senior High School level. Teaching English specially teaching writing skill is important because it is used to communicate with other people in society to express our feelings and opinions in form of written text.

According to the observation that the researcher had done before, writing seemed difficult to be mastered by the students because the result of the learning writing was un-satisfaction. Nunan (2003) stated that the most difficult task to do in language learning is to produce a coherent, fluent, extended a piece of writing, which even more challenging for second language learners. The students had low interest in learning writing and lack ability when write their ideas with the use of correct language use, vocabulary, and punctuation to compose English sentences into readable and acceptable text.

Based on the observation, there were many problems that may cause the students unable to write a good writing. The students faced some difficulties to write a text. First, they had no sufficient idea to compose text, they copy and paste the writing from internet and did plagiarism. The students could not develop their

ideas into paragraphs based on their own thought. Second, the students did not know how to express the ideas into sequence of sentences and organize them into chronological and coherent paragraphs. They had less ability to use appropriate words and grammar mastery. The last difficulty was found that the students had problems to use correct spelling and punctuation. Some problems before were supported by the classroom activity which the writing class was considered as a bored instruction because the learning only conducted in the classroom.

Writing has several components but for this research, the researcher focused on capitalization, punctuation, and vocabulary. The first, the chief reason to capitalize a word is that the word is proper, not because the word has greater status than other words. A proper noun identifies a specific member of a class. A common noun, on the other hand, denotes either the whole class or any random member of the class. For example, King Henry VIII (a particular member of a class) was a king of England (the class itself). Capital letters have two principal uses in English writing. First, they may be used to mark the beginning of statements. Second, they may be used to distinguish between particular and general classes of persons, places, and things.

The second, punctuation plays an important role to help the readers establish intonation. In other words, it is a command for the readers to raise their voice or drop their speech. It also can help the readers to understand the state of mind of the writer. Punctuation orders prose and sends signals to the reader about how to interpret it. Good sentence structure and punctuation makes reading flow;

It warns of what is to come; it helps the reader read without having to re-read. Meaning is changed, sometimes dramatically, by punctuation. It is one of the toolboxes of good writing. The next three pages give a resume, but if you really want the low-down on punctuation, and to be entertained at the same time read “Eats, Shoots and Leaves” by Lynne Truss, listed under “Further Reading” at the end of this manual.

The third is students' vocabulary abilities. Vocabulary knowledge is often viewed as a critical tool for second language learners because a limited vocabulary in a second language impedes successful communication. Vocabulary is important in writing. By having many vocabularies, the writer can explore his/her writing deeper. The use of idioms can add values to a composition. Underscoring the importance of vocabulary acquisition, Schmitt (2000) emphasizes that “lexical knowledge is central to communicative competence and to the acquisition of a second language” p. 55). Nation (2001) further describes the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and language use as complementary: knowledge of vocabulary enables language use and, conversely, language use leads to an increase in vocabulary knowledge.

There are twelve genres that are taught to Junior High School students. Those are descriptive, recount, narrative, procedure, explanation, discussion, exposition, news item, Information report, anecdote and review. The researcher focused on descriptive text which is taught in the Eighth Grade of smp negeri 2 percut sei tuan. One of the text which must be learn by Junior High School students is descriptive text. The researcher choose descriptive text because this text is very

good to research for description. A descriptive text is a text which a writer tries to picture what he is describing. Description is used to describe a particular thing/object, place, or person. The descriptive text is really different from the other kinds of text. Descriptive text is the text that describes something. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that descriptive writing is a kind of writing that consists of description, characteristics, definition of something, object or person. Then, the descriptive text is usually in simple present tense.

Researcher chose Smp Negeri 2 Percut Sei Tuan as a research school because researchers had previously conducted Magang 3 at the school, so researchers had known the condition of students at the school. Based on the title of the research above, the researcher hopes that all the difficulties of students in writing descriptive texts can be known and teachers are also expected to provide more examples and exercises about descriptive text to students so as to achieve the purpose of education well, especially English subjects. The researcher will conduct the study under the title *Student's Ability in Writing Descriptive Text at Eighth Grade of SMP Negeri 2 Percut Sei Tuan.*

B. The Problem of the Study

Based on the above background, the researcher formulates the research question as follows "How is the student's ability in writing descriptive text?"

C. The Objective of the Study

In relation to the problem above, the main objective of the research is to find out the student's ability in writing a descriptive text at the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Negeri 2 Percut Sei Tuan.

D. The Scope of the Study

The scope of this research is analyzing writing descriptive text. This research be focused on analyzing vocabulary, mechanics (consist of punctuation and capitalization) & organization.

E. The Significances of the Study

The findings of this study will be expected as follows:

Theoretically, this study is expected to give a real portrait about Indonesia students' ability and difficulties in writing descriptive text, they have new knowledge through the real condition in learning process so the students achievement in writing descriptive text will be improved.

Practically, this research is expected to give much information about students' difficulties, so in the future the students will be careful in writing and English teachers can help the students to solve the difficulties they face.