CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Writing is one of four language skills that has to be mastered by students. In daily activity, writing plays an important role. Many works around the world are dealt with writing activity. In every office for example, there must be writing corresponding activity. It indicates that writing supports human’s daily activity. According to Tarigan (1996:4) writing can be reached in long time, because writing is a means of communication which is done indirectly, the writer does not face the reader and besides writing ability as one of the language skills is considered a productive and expressive skill.

Based on the current School-Based Curriculum that writing is one of the language skills that must be taught at junior high school/Islamic junior high school (SMP/MTs). The teaching of writing aims at enabling students to master the functional texts and monologue texts or paragraphs in the form of descriptive, narrative, recount, procedure, and report. In addition, based on Competency Standard and Basic Competency, the second year students are expected to be able to express meaningful ideas in term of functional text and simple short essay in the form of descriptive and recount to interact with people in their nearest environment. The work of writing is presented in the form of text types, usually known as genres, which are closely related to the purpose of each type. Descriptive writing is one of the text types that is taught at the eighth grade.
Descriptive writing has a social function to describe a particular person, place, or thing, for instance, description of a particular building, specific animal, particular place, and specific person (Rudi Hartono, 2005:6). Besides, descriptive paragraph is a set of sentences related to each other in which the writer draw their ideas and thoughts vividly based on their senses on the object they see.

Based on the writer’s observation through conducting interview to English teacher and students volunteer, 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.

Those problems of descriptive writing are important to be solved, because it can appear the difficulties for the students to continue the next writing materials. Also the students will have low motivation in writing class because they feel writing is a difficult skill. Furthermore, the students will have boredom in writing class.

One of the teaching strategies that can help teachers to improve students’ writing ability in descriptive paragraph is using Mind Mapping.
Mind Mapping is a way getting students’ ideas together. It is a learning strategy that can help students to facilitate their learning by generating and organizing the ideas about the topic they are going to write. Mind Mapping also can make them more imaginative and creative in writing class.

According to Wycoff in Hernowo (2003:141) “mind mapping is a good way to produce and organize the idea before writing. Mind mapping can be said that it is guaranteeing the loss of problem faced by students in writing”.

3.166Mind Mapping is expected can make a positive atmosphere in the classroom. It can throw away time consuming notes because it shows the shape of topic, related ideas and concepts, and the relative importance of all the information. Moreover, it can make students interested in teaching learning activity because it serves incorporated keywords, colors and images to make student easier to generate their writing. This learning strategy is hopefully can make students more active in writing class and can improve their ability in writing descriptive paragraph.

From the observation in SMP Negeri 1 Sumpiuh, it was found there were some problems in teaching process and students mastery in writing descriptive text. It was about students difficulty in producing and organizing their ideas to make good composition in writing especially descriptive text. The mind map is chosen as a media to help the students creats their ideas. Classroom Action Research (CAR) is used to overcome those problems, because CAR is strategy for teaching more about teaching and learning process. The writer interested in making a research based on the problem above. Thus, the title of the thesis is “Improving Students Ability in Writing
Descriptive Text of School Environment through Mind Mapping in second grade of SMP N 1 Sumpiuh”.

B. Reasons for Choosing the Topic

There are some reasons why the writer chooses mind mapping as the technique in improving student’s writing skill, the reasons are as follows:

1. Giving a help to increase the students writing skill. Because of students skill in writing still low and need a technique to improve it.

2. Helping the students to develop their idea in writing through mind mapping. Mind mapping is a technique that effective to help students to develop idea.

C. Problem of the Research

Based on the axplanation above, the problem of the research is: is mind mapping able to improve student’s ability in writing descriptive text?

D. Aim of the Research

The aim of this research is to improve the students ability in writing descriptive text through mind mapping.

E. The Scope of The Research

The research focuses only on improving the students’ writing through mind mapping. The material of teaching is descriptive text. The reason for choosing this text because descriptive text is one type of text that used in the syllabus of second grade in junior high school.
F. Clarification of the Terms

1. Improving

The New Oxford Illustrated Dictionary (1978:842) stated that improve (V) is make, become, better. In this case, improve is to make someone or communities (students) are better in their language learning especially in writing.

2. Writing Ability

William Morris in the New Grolier Webster Dictionary of The English Language (1981:1150) and (1981:906) defines:

- Write (V) as to trace of form character with a pen, pencil or the like
- Skill (N) is defined in execution or performance

Therefore, writing ability here means in performance trace form of characters with a pen, pencil and the like.

3. Descriptive text

According to Gerot and Wignell (1995:208) in their book entitled “Making Sense of Functional Grammar” state that description is used to discribe a particular person, place or thing. It means that descriptive text is a text that asks to the students to describe an object (person, place or thing).

4. School Environment

The New Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (2005: 1356) stated that School (N) is a place where children go to be educated, and Environment (N) is the condition that affect the behaviour and
development of somebody/something. It means that school environment is a educating place that effect the behaviour and development of students.

5. Mind Mapping

According to Tony Buzan mind mapping is a diagram used to represent words, ideas, tasks, or other items linked to arrange radially around a central key word or idea.

G. Research Contributions

1. For students
   a. To improve their writing skill through mind mapping
   b. To improve self confidence
   c. To improve their English achievement

2. For teacher
   a. To get feedback in improving her work
   b. To enrich perception about mind mapping
   c. To apply the research as way of helping the students who get problems in learning process.

3. For writer
   a. To give many opportunities, practice knowledge and skill and writing
   b. To manage the teaching-learning process in the real classroom situation directly
c. To give the experience in working collaboratively in classroom action research

d. To find out the problems arisen in the class and also to find out the better solution to improve students writing skill through mind mapping as the technique.