CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

In learning English, besides listening, speaking, and writing, Reading is one of four skills that have to be mastered by students. By reading, students get much information that could increase their knowledge widely without going anywhere. As supported by Siriphanich, (2010:2) reading is an important skill to be learnt in order to get information from textbooks, research, reports, and other written sources. Reading also helps students to improve general language skill in English, such as building students’ vocabulary, improving writing skill, and helping students to find out new ideas, facts, and experiences.

Reading could not be separated from comprehension activity. Comprehension activity aims at knowing and understanding the content of written text. When students are reading a passage, they automatically have to comprehend that passage to know the available information and understand content of the passage. According to Resmini (2007), the main aim of reading comprehension is to understand the message of a passage, and emphasizing the mastery of passage content rather than read beautifully and quickly. Hence students must comprehend the text to get much information from written texts.

However in reality, many students still find it difficult to comprehend a text. They are confused to find out main ideas and detailed information from the text. When students are in that situation, comprehending the text would become a boring activity and influence the students badly in following teaching and learning English.
There are some problems dealing with reading comprehension usually in daily teaching and learning English in the eighth grade of SMP Negeri 3 Purwokerto. In an interview with 8th grade English teacher, it was found out most students paid less attention to the ongoing learning and most students got bored in the course. In addition, it was found the level of students’ understanding the subject matter is still low which resulted in students’ bad mark.

There are many available ways and techniques to solve that problems. One of them is *Mind Mapping Technique* that will be applied in this study. Mind Mapping technique is a teaching technique that uses graphic, pictures, arrows, branches, and colors representing idea and information in the text. It also has many advantages related to improve students’ reading comprehension.

According to Jiang (2010), through mind maps, students’ logic, thinking, analyzing, creativity, memory, speed reading and other students’ ability are significantly enhanced. Mind map helps students to get detail information by its branches, lines, and colors. The branches are used to know the generalization of the information from main idea to sub–idea; the lines show the connection between main idea and sub-idea; the colors help distinguishing connection from each topic and sub-topic. By using mind map, students are expected to be able to comprehend the text easier.

Based on the explanation above, the action research will be conducted to improve students’ English reading comprehension entitled: “THE USE OF MIND MAPPING TECHNIQUE TO IMPROVE STUDENTS’ READING COMPREHENSION OF DESCRIPTIVE TEXT” (An Action Research at the
Eighth Grade Students of SMP Negeri 3 Purwokerto in the Academic Year of 2014/2015).

B. Reason for Choosing Topic

These are the reasons of choosing the topic:

1. Mind mapping technique is a teaching technique that uses graphic, pictures, arrows, branches, and colors representing idea and information in the text. It also has many advantages related to improve students’ reading comprehension.

2. Mind Mapping can assist teachers in planning for instruction by helping them identify the patterns of organization of ideas and concepts.

C. Problem of the Research

Based on the explanation above, the problem of this research was stated by the following question “can Mind Mapping technique improve the students’ reading comprehension of Descriptive Text?”.

D. Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to improve the students’ reading comprehension of Descriptive Text by using Mind Mapping Technique at grade VIII-F of SMP Negeri 3 Purwokerto.

E. Contribution of the Study

The writer hopes this research would be beneficial for:

1. The Teacher
The researcher hoped this research would be able to improve the learning quality, so it would help the teacher to know the real fact of the students’ reading comprehension in comprehending a text. It also would give an alternative way for teacher in teaching reading in order to make the students interested in following the reading lesson.

2. The students

The researcher hoped this research would be useful for the students to improve their reading comprehension and can improve their motivation in following the reading lesson.

3. The Reader

This research would give knowledge and be an input to the reader especially about the technique of teaching reading.

F. Definition of the Terms

1. Reading comprehension

Reading comprehension is defined as “the ability of understanding, using and reflecting on the article, it could increase one’s personal knowledge and help them to achieve the general education target, also it could develop one’s potential and promote them to participate in social activities” (Programmer for International Student Assessment (PISA) in Jiang, 2010:1).
2. Mind Mapping technique

A Mind Mapping technique is a technique using a diagram to represent words, ideas, tasks, or other information connected to and arranged radials around a central key word or idea (Sujana, 2012:4).