CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of Study

Nowadays, learning English has become a trend all around the world since English is an international language including in Indonesia. By having good English, one can communicate with different people from different countries. That is why English is very important to learn in all level of study.

Learning English involves the development of four skills which can be categorized as productive skills and receptive skills. Speaking and writing are said to be active or productive skills, whereas listening and reading are said to be passive or receptive skills. As productive skills writing and speaking produce something; those are speech and text. On the other hand, in receptive skill, reading and listening, students do not produce anything, but only receive sound or read text.

Among those four skills, speaking plays an important role in mastering English. Speaking is mostly used by people rather than the three other skills. As Nunan (1991: 51) states that speaking is an important aspect in learning a second or foreign language and success is measured in terms of ability to carry out conversation in the target language. Because of that, speaking becomes an essential skill in learning language because
language is a tool of communication, and the most effective communication is by speaking. To master speaking ability, students should practice every day. The students should also know the English sound, structure, vocabulary and culture of the language to support their speaking ability.

However, in Junior High School, many students felt hard to learn English, especially speaking. They still find difficulties to practice speaking. It is supported by pre-observation and pre-interview result with the English teacher and the students of the class. The pre-observation result at VIII C grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Sumbang showed that more than 77.14% of students had not reached KKM (the score ≥ 7). It means that only 22.86% of students gained score ≥ 7 and reached KKM. It proved that they had low ability in speaking. Then based on the pre-interview result showed that almost all students at VIII C grade students felt difficult to speak up because they lack vocabulary, some of them still confused of what they have to say, and even they confused how to start their ideas to speak. Their teacher often asks them to speak English without providing them with words that can help them to stimulate their ideas.

In accordance with the decipherment above and the strong desire of finding the solution to these problems, the writer and the teacher had motivation to do the Classroom Action Research (CAR) in improving
students’ speaking ability at the eight grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Sumbang in academic year 2011/2012 using picture strip story media.

Picture strip story is the series of pictures with a word or some words on it that are used to tell a story or describe event in chronological order by relating one picture to another (Prochaska, 2001: 1). With picture strip story students may enjoy learning speaking. It can encourage the students to speak because picture strip story can stimulate ideas for them. Picture strip story also helps the students to enrich their vocabulary because it provides words to the students.

B. The Reasons of Choosing Topic

There are some reasons why the topic is chosen:

1. English Speaking ability is one of the important skills that can be used to communicate with others in the target language, interact and exchange the information and it is also as an international language so the students speaking ability needs to be improved.

2. Picture strip story is interesting media for the students in language teaching especially in speaking activity. Picture strip story can help the students to speak in class and contribute their ideas by presenting pictures that describes events with relationship of one picture to other picture. Picture strip story also can improve students’ vocabularies by providing them words on the pictures.
C. The Problem of Study

In this research, the problem is formulated as follows: “Can picture strip story improve students’ speaking ability at the eight grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Sumbang in academic year 2011/2012?”

D. The Aim of Study

The aim of this research is to know whether picture strip story can improve students’ speaking ability at the eight grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Sumbang in academic year 2011/2012 or not.

E. The Limitation of Study

In this research, the problem will be limited in order not to deviate from the focus of the study. In this case, the discussion focuses only on speaking monologue.

F. The Clarification of Term

In order to make the term more clearly, the meaning of the term which is used in this topic is as follows:

1. Speaking Ability

Speaking ability can be described as the ability to use in essentially normal communication, stress, intonation, grammatical structure and
vocabulary of the foreign language at normal rate delivery for native

2. Picture Strip Story

Picture strip story is the series of pictures with a word or some
words on it that are used to tell a story or describe event in
chronological order by relating one picture to another (Prochaska,
2001: 1).

G. Research Contribution

It is expected that this research can give contribution to:

1. Student
   a. The result will help the students in improving their speaking
      ability.
   b. Students will be interested more in learning English, especially for
      speaking activity.

2. Teacher
   a. The teacher could develop professionalism.
   b. The teacher could enhance her knowledge and ability.

3. Another Researcher

It is hoped that the result of the study can be used as reference for
other researchers.