CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

Writing is one of four language skills that have 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 written correspondence. It indicates that writing supports human’s daily activity. 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. Writing is an activity to express ideas, issues, events, feeling or thinking to the others through written form. Writing involves some language components; they are fluency, grammar, vocabulary, cohesion and punctuation. Some students think that writing is difficult activity, especially writing in a foreign language, because when the students want to write they should know a lot of information or ideas and grammar in their mind so that they will be able to express them into sentences, paragraphs and essays.

Writing is one of the language skills that are 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 are 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 (Hartono, 2005:6). Besides, descriptive paragraph is a set of sentences related to each other in which the writer draws their ideas and thoughts vividly based on their senses on the object they see.

Many approaches, methods, strategies and techniques can be used by the teacher in teaching writing. Every teacher knows that variety is one the factors in maintaining a high level motivation and interest the students, so teacher should find activity to make learning writing easier. One of the ways is by using “Four-Square Method”.

Four-Square is a model of teaching writing that students’ to work together or individually in writing process. It means Four-Square method can be applied for students’ group or individually in learning process. According to Gould (1999), describe about Four-Square method is the way to help the
students interest and motivation in easy organization in every square that have. This method is suitable for the students’ eighth graders.

In this case the writer would like to know the effectiveness of using Four-Square writing method in teaching descriptive text, so that the writer would like to make a research with the title “The Effectiveness of Using Four-Square Writing Method to Improve Students’ Writing Skill of Descriptive Texts (An Experimental Research at the Eighth Graders of SMP Negeri 1 Patikraja in the Academic Year of 2014/2015)”.

B. Reasons for Choosing the Topic

There are some reasons why the writer chooses Four-Square as the method to improve students’ writing skill. Those reasons are as follows:

1. Giving a help to increase the students’ writing skill, especially in writing descriptive, because of students’ skill in writing is still low and it needs a method to improve it.

2. Helping the students to develop their idea in writing descriptive text using Four-Square. Four-Square writing is a method of teaching basic writing skill to help students in developing idea.

C. Problem of the Research

The problem of this research: “is Four-Square writing method effective to improve students’ writing of Descriptive Texts at the eighth grade students of SMP 1 Patikraja in academic year 2014/2015?”
D. Aim of the Research

The aim of this research is to find out whether Four Square writing method is effective or not to improve students’ writing of Descriptive Texts at the eighth grade students of SMP 1 Patikraja in academic year 2014/2015.

E. Clarification of the Terms

1. Effectiveness

In Oxford Learner’s Pocket Dictionary (2003: 138), effectiveness is producing the result that is wanted or intended; producing a successful result.

2. Four Square Method

According to Gould (1999) says that the Four-Square method is a simplified graphic organizer for teaching writing to children in school. Four-square writing is a method of teaching basic writing skills that is applicable across grade levels and curriculum areas.

3. Improve

Improve is to raise a more desirable or more excellent quality or condition, make better (Hornby, 1995: 598)

4. Writing skill

Wordreference (2010) stated that Writing is one of the ways to give an idea or message which is form in writing on a piece of paper or the other area.
5. Descriptive Text

According to Gerot and Wignell (1995: 208) in their book entitled “Making Sense of Functional grammar” state that description is used to describe 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).

F. Significance of the Study

The significances of the study are:

1. For the Teacher
   
   The result of the study is expected to help the teacher in choosing the suitable method to teach writing especially descriptive text.

2. For the Students
   
   The result of the study is expected to improve the students’ ability in learning writing especially descriptive text.

3. For Writer
   
   Four-Square method is only one of many teaching method that can be developed by writer to make students’ writing skill of descriptive text better.