CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

English is highly necessary to be learned and mastered by everyone in order to be able to compete in the globalization era. English is a key to open and master science and technology, because most of scientists write their experts and inventions in English.

English is taught as a compulsory subject of junior high school in Indonesia. English is the first foreign language that is important to be learn at school. The national policy as reflected in content standard 2006 implies that the teaching of English at the junior high school is focused on the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The four language skills should be taught in an integrated manner (Depdiknas, 2006).

Writing as one of the English skills is very important to be learned to face globalization era. Writing is a vital skill for ‘speakers’ of a foreign language as much as for everyone using their own first language (Jeremy Harmer, 2004). Among the four skills such as reading, speaking, writing and listening, writing is considered as the most complex skill. It is different from speaking because writing needs a process. Oshima and Hogue (1991:3) explain that:

It is important to note that writing is a process, not a “product”. This means that a piece of writing, whether it is a composition for your English class or a lab report for your chemistry class is never complete; that is, it is always possible to review and revise, and review and revise again.
Since writing is a complex activity, there are many problems in writing like the difficulties in writing, word choice, tenses choice, and etc. Richards and Renandya (2002) state:

There is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for L2 learners to master. The difficulty lies not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these ideas into readable text. The skills involved in writing are highly complex. L2 writers have to pay attention to higher level skills of planning and organizing as well as lower level skills of spelling, punctuation, word choice, and so on. The difficulty becomes even more pronounced if their language proficiency is weak.

In teaching text types of English in Junior High School, teachers need various kinds of techniques in order to reach maximum result for students’ writing. Teacher should create good learning atmosphere so that the students can be motivated, enjoy learning and take part actively in the classroom. One of the causes is technique of teaching that decrease students’ motivation. As stated by Effendi (2005), the failure of teaching might be caused by the teachers themselves and the technique of teaching. The teachers are considered as dominant figures in the classroom to increase or decrease students’ motivation. If the students are motivated, they will enjoy in the classroom and try to be active. In this case, the students can study actively if the technique used by the teachers is interesting and challenging.

As stated by Jarum (2008), students frequently get difficulties in writing. They are not able to organize their ideas well in the written form. One of the causes is the classroom atmosphere was individual competition and the students did the writing assignments individually. They were not accustomed to sharing ideas. They never work cooperatively when they were writing. Richards and
Renandya (2002) also stated that process writing in the classroom may be construed as a programme of instruction which provides students with a series of planned learning experiences to help them understand the nature of writing at every point. It was also found that there were some different techniques that implemented in teaching writing. They were brainstorming, note taking, examine cohesive link, examine punctuation and grammar, and examine sentence arrangement. Teaching writing, most of teacher applied the techniques of outlining and guided discussion.

Considering the conditions above, the writer suggests cooperative learning as a method of teaching in writing class. Dealing with the concept of cooperative learning, Slavin (1994:2) states:

Cooperative learning refers to a variety of teaching methods in which students work in small groups to help one another learn academic content. In cooperative classroom, students are expected to help each other, to discuss and argue with each other, to assess each other’s current knowledge and fill in gap in each other understanding.

Cooperative learning is one of approaches in teaching and learning activities when the students head together in main group, the purpose of the main group are effectively to give support, help, encouragement, and assistance each member needs to make academic progress. Novia (2002) also stated that implementation of cooperative learning in English class for young learner as one of the method in teaching and learning process can help the students learn English from each others, the concepts emphasizes on students to work together than individually, because in cooperative learning the students are more caring, supportive, and build social competence, committed relationship.
In teaching descriptive paragraph, the teacher can use media like pictures. Oshima and Hogue (2007), descriptive writing appeals to the sense, so it tells how something looks, feels, smells, tastes, and/or sounds. A good description is a word picture; the reader can imagine the object, place, or person in his or her mind. Firstly, pictures can motivate the students and make them want to pay attention to the learning activity. Secondly, pictures can contribute to the successful delivery of content in which the language is being used. Thirdly, pictures can be described in an objective way (e.g., *this is a train*) or in an interpreted way (e.g., *it is probably a local train*) or can be responses to questions or substitutions through controlled practice. Finally, pictures can stimulate and provide information to be referred to in conversation, discussion, and story telling.

Based on the explanation above, it can be said that using picture in learning activity especially writing descriptive paragraph can help students to write the descriptive paragraph easily, give motivation and create effective and enjoyable learning toward the students. It caused the writer using mind mapping to provide with cooperative learning. In mind mapping method, students can make their ideas easier before change into a good descriptive paragraph with a picture or drawing.

According to Buzan (2002),

Mind Mapping is strong techniques which prevent a universal key to open whole potential brain key, hide the skill with membrane, word, picture, numbers, logic, rhythm, color, and conscious thought about space room with fun ways. Mind map using visual reminders, and this sensory in a pattern of related ideas, such as the road map which is used for learn organize and plan.

By using mind mapping, student can get a lot of advantages; mind mapping can optimize right brain and left brain because mind map working with picture,
color and simple words; mind mapping can economize the note because by using mind mapping students can summaries one materiel on half paper; teaching more effective because the work of mind map same with working of brain that unorganized systematic; this system can easily the recall process in every what have learning before; mind mapping can improve creativity of the students and the teachers because they will be stimulated to make a pictures or colors on mind mapping.

Based on the current School – Based Curriculum that writing is one of the language skill 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 textx and monologue texts or paragraph in the form of descriptive, narrative, recount, procedure, and report. In addition, based on Competency Standard – Standar Kompetensi (SK) and Basic Competency – Kompetensi Dasar (KD), the second year students are expected to be able to express meaningful ideas in term of functional texts 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 texts types, usually known as genres, which are closely related to the purpose of each type. Descriptive paragraph is one of the types that is taught at eight grade.

Based on that curriculum, raden fatah junior high school was chosen because according to the English teacher that the students have less achievement in studying English especially in writing class. It makes them have less ability in writing. Many students feel bored because they get difficult in writing a paragraph
especially in descriptive paragraph. The writer observes the second grade of Raden Fatah Junior High school in class A because the students have learned about descriptive paragraph in writing. One of the technique of teaching learning that can help teachers to improve students’ ability in writing descriptive paragraph is using mind mapping. Mind mapping is a way getting their ideas together. It is a learning strategy that can make the students easier to find their ideas by using picture. They can draw when they make a descriptive paragraph and it can make students are easier to create a good paragraph quickly. In addition, they can identify and understand the structure of the sentences. Mind mapping also can make students more imaginative and creative in writing class.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Based on the background of the study above, the writer formulates the problem as follows “Does Mind mapping as the cooperative learning increase the students’ ability in writing descriptive paragraph?”

1.3 Purpose of the Study

In line with the statement of the problem, aim of the study is to know whether or not “mind mapping as cooperative learning increase the student’s ability in writing descriptive paragraph”.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to give the following contributions, the first for the English teachers, it is expected that this study is able to increase their ability in teaching writing using mind mapping. Then, for the students, it is
expected to give the alternative way in learning writing. For the next researchers hopefully, this study can be applied as the reference in doing the following research.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

In this study, the writer takes the scope mind mapping used by the teacher in teaching writing and the limit of mind mapping used by the teacher in teaching writing descriptive paragraph at second grade student of Raden Fatah Junior High School.

1.6 Definition of the Key Terms

There are several key terms that will be clarified in this observe to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation. The observer defines the key terms as follow:

1. Writing

Writing is an act or art of forming letter on stone, paper, wood, and other suitable medium to record the ideas which characters and words express or to communicate the ideas by visible sign (Webster, 2000). Writing is a form of language that expresses the feeling in written.

2. Descriptive Paragraph

A descriptive paragraph is to present a single, clear picture (description) of a person, a place, a thing, an event, or an idea. Description is commonly used in novels, short stories, and essays. In descriptive paragraph we can know the situation that happened on there, especially to make a real observations. A
good description is a word picture; the reader can imagine the object, place, or person in his or her mind (Oshima and Hogue, 2007).

3. Mind mapping

Mind mapping is a diagram used to represent words, ideas, tasks or other items linked to and arranged radically around a central key word or idea. Mind map using visual reminders, and this sensory in a pattern of related ideas, such as the road map which is used for learn organize and plan (Buzan, 2000).

4. Cooperative learning

Cooperative learning is a teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. In cooperative classroom, students are expected to help each other, to discuss and argue with each other, to assess each other’s current knowledge and fill in gap in each other understanding (Slavin, 1994).