CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of study, statement of problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and definition of key terms. Each section is presented as follows.

1.1 Research Background

English plays an important role in all aspects of national relationship with other countries such as diplomatic, social, cultural, and also education. In education, English has an important role. It could be seen that language has been learned in any levels of education. In Indonesia, English is considered as a foreign language. English has been taught from elementary level up to the Universities. Almost books in the libraries of universities are written in English, such as journals, and articles for any fields are written in English.

Teaching English in junior high school is one of the bridges to make a good step for students in their ages. Lenneberg (as cited in Hurford, 1991) states that there was a neurologically based “critical period”, which complete mastery of language, but it is no longer possible, because it will end around the onset of puberty. According to his statement, it means that students still can learn easily to study English before they are in the critical period or puberties. In this case, students in junior high school have a good chance to study English better rather than people who study English when they already get puberties.

There are four skills which students must be learned. All of which are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. From all of the four language skills,
writing is very important skill. Writing aims to tell and to express the feeling to the reader. Writing can also be defined as both physical and mental activity that is aimed to express and impress (Nunan, 2003:88). It is categorized as the physical activity because the writer must act of committing words or ideas like typing an e-mail into a computer. As a mental work, the activities of writing focus more on the act of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express and organize them into statements and paragraphs that enable a reader in understanding the ideas of the written work. Moreover, it can express one’s idea in a piece of paper clearly. It will be understood and good when each part of the sentence connects to each other. That is why writing seems to be the hardest thing to do in teaching-learning process besides speaking. The differences between writing and speaking sometimes are considered as easier because the grammatical pattern in speaking is not necessary as long as the audience gets the ideas during the communication. Meanwhile, writing has only one chance to convey some information as meaningful as possible for the readers. Thus, teaching writing in an appropriate way is required to facilitate student’s second language acquisition.

One of the types of writing taught in Junior High School is descriptive text. This material will be helpful in daily life for them. Descriptive text is a text which presents information about something. It is as a result of systematic observation and analysis. The information given in a descriptive text is very general. It gives information about a subject as the topic of the text, but students have some difficulties in learning this material. The students usually do not know about kinds of topics that can be chosen and how to develop them to produce a descriptive
text. When writing a descriptive text, students must be able to understand about the grammar.

Nunan (2003:153) states that grammar is a set of rules specifying the correct ordering of words at the sentence level. The importance of grammar is also due to the fact because grammar of the language makes it is possible for us to talk about language. As human beings, we can put sentences together even as children we can all do grammar. But to be able to talk about how sentences are built, about the types of words and word groups that make up sentences that is to know about grammar. And knowing about grammar also helps us to understand what makes sentences and paragraphs clear, interesting and precise.

Resulting from grammar which has complete components in English, it is very common for the students to make an error. The new website of Academic Skills Office includes the useful information on common errors in writing. It says that one of the common errors which students made in writing process is tenses. Chomsky (1957) states that tense is a structure rule for the English auxiliary. Study about tenses is important to the students, because how to speak in Indonesia and English is totally different. Indonesian language does not have a tense to speak with other people.

When the researcher did Internship III in SMP Raden Fatah Batu and observed the eighth-grade classroom, there were some cases about study tenses in SMP Raden Fatah Batu. Students were confused in how to apply tenses in particular Simple Present Tense. Simple Present Tense is important as the basic rule for the students to make and to use into the sentences to communicate in daily life and to write a descriptive text. Students did not understand especially in using
subject-verb agreement, and usage. They could not use the subject-verb agreement and usage; it was known that the ability of the students in using Simple Present Tense was low. It was found that many students often did not understand why some sentences used auxiliaries; *is, am, and are* instead of auxiliaries; *do and does*. Moreover, some students were confused in differentiating which subject used auxiliaries; *do or does*. All the problems above arose since the students did not understand the right rule of Simple Present Tense.

Based on a previous study of Kusumawati’s thesis (2013), all descriptive texts made by the students contained errors particularly in using Simple Present Tense. The errors were in the forms of *omission, addition, misformation, and misordering*. Among those kinds of errors, *omission* was kind of error which mostly occurs.

Falinta (2015) found that there were six types of errors made by the students in using Simple Present Tense in writing descriptive text. All of which were syntax and morphology errors, semantics and lexicons errors, *omission* errors, *addition* errors, *misformation* errors, and global errors. The highest error was *omission* errors.

Doing the analysis of student’s error is needed. Error analysis involves the analysis of error patterns to identify difficulties that students may have with facts, concepts, strategies and procedures. Identifying the type of error allows the teacher to address learner needs more efficiently. From this study, teacher also understands what the students’ need.
Driven from this phenomenon, the researcher is interested in conducting an investigation about an analysis of students’ error in descriptive text faced by the eighth-grade students at SMP Raden Fatah Batu.

1.2 Research Questions

In line with research background and the need to construct the inquiry of knowledge in this topic, the researcher formulates research questions. In this present study, there are two research questions designed. These are:

1. What are the types of errors made by the eighth-grade students in using Simple Present Tense in descriptive text at SMP Raden Fatah Batu?
2. How does the teacher help the students to cope with the students’ errors in using Simple Present Tense in descriptive text at SMP Raden Fatah Batu?

1.3 Research Objectives

In line with the research question formulated in this present study, the researcher intends to:

1. Know the types of errors made by the eighth-grade students in using Simple Present Tense in descriptive text at SMP Raden Fatah Batu
2. Know the way how the teacher helps the students to cope with their errors in using Simple Present Tense in descriptive text at SMP Raden Fatah Batu.

1.4 Scope and Limitation

1.4.1 Scope

In the study, the scope is only on the error faced by the students on Simple Present Tense implemented in writing descriptive Text.
1.4.2 Limitation

The writer also makes a limitation for this research only for the students’ writing work of descriptive text produced by the eighth-grade students academic year of 2017 at SMP Raden Fatah Batu.

1.5 Research Significances

In order to give the inquiry knowledge in this present study, the researcher constructs the following contribution. The significance of study is designed for English teachers, the writer, English learners, and next researchers.

1. English teachers:

   It can be used as consideration to develop their knowledge and experiences in teaching process especially in teaching simple present tense in descriptive text. Moreover, this research can help them to identify the problem faced in teaching tenses process, especially in using simple present tense in descriptive text and the way the teacher helps the students to cope with the students’ errors.

2. The writer:

   It can give an experience and knowledge about how to implement teaching tenses which is proper for the students and to understand well their errors in using tenses.

3. English learners:

   The result of this study can help students to understand and to learn more about simple present tense. Therefore, students can apply the correct simple present tense in descriptive text.
4. Next researchers:

The result of this study can be a reference for next researchers who want to conduct research in similar topic.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding, the following definitions are given:

1. Analysis

Analysis is a process of observing, analysing, and classifying the deviations of the rules of the second language and then to reveal the systems operated by a learner (Brown, 1980).

2. Error

Error is a systematic deviation, when a learner has not learnt something and consistently gets it wrong’ (Norrish, 1987:7). In this study, error refers to a deviation of tenses which happens to the eight grade students of SMP Raden Fatah Batu.

3. Simple Present Tenses

Simple Present Tense is a tense which expresses daily habits or usual activities and general statements of facts (Azar, 1992: 3).

4. Descriptive Text

Descriptive text is a kind of text which consists of description, characteristics, definition of something, object or person (Wyrick, 1987:227).

5. SMP Raden Fatah Batu

SMP Raden Fatah Batu is one of a private junior high school located in Jalan Raya Selecta, Sidomulyo, Kecamatan Batu, Kota Batu where this study is conducted.