

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Rationale

The global development towards the 21st century which is characterized by the advance in science and technology with all their impacts on every aspect of life has made us aware of the importance of language as a tool for global communication.

A language is a systematic means of communication by the use of sounds or conventional symbols in written language. So the language is a medium to express in an idea, thought, opinion, wish and feeling. It is the code we all use to express ourselves and communicate to others. It is a communication by word of mouth. It is the mental faculty or power of vocal communication. It is a system for communicating ideas and feelings using sounds, gestures, signs or marks.

The effective tool to know one another is language. Language as a communication tool will make us be able to express our feeling, idea, and our wishes, and to know another feeling, idea, or wishes. As quoted by Mary Mc Kay said that “language is an intimate part of social identity”.¹ From this statement it has been known that language also will make us be able closer with another.

Language, so far as we know, is something specific to humans, that is to say it is the basic capacity that distinguishes humans from all other living beings. Language therefore remains potentially as communicative medium capable of

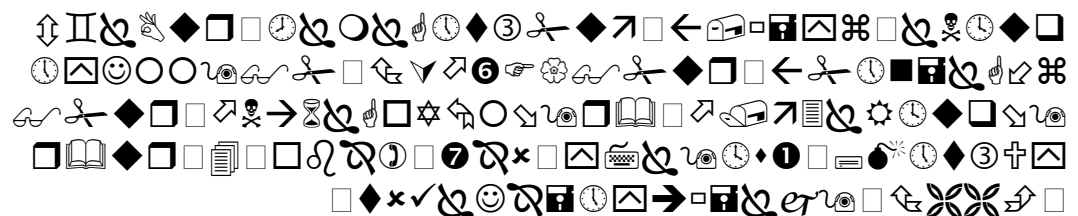
¹ Sandra Lee Mekay and Nancy H. Hornberger, *Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching* (Cambridge: University Press, 1996), p. 3

expressing ideas and concepts as well as mood feelings and attitudes. A language is the written and spoken methods of combining words to create meaning used by a particular group of people.

In line with above statement, William O'Grady and Michael Dobrovolsky state, "Language is many things—a system of communication, a medium for thought, a vehicle for literary expression, a social institution, a matter for political controversy, a factor in nation building."²

Human beings use different languages in their communication. In the civilization growth, communication has enabled human beings to develop science and technology. The development of communication technology such as building a spider net, everything must be interconnected not only does this communication network unity among countries but also facilitates international connection.

There are so many languages in the world. Every country has its own language that is quite different from other. So, it will be difficult to communicate with people from others nations if there is no language that can be understood by them. So, to communicate easily with the others, it is very important to learn the other languages in order to make the same understanding. It is related to the Allah Almighty creates different languages for human beings as stated in Ar-Rum: 22:



²William O' Grady and Michael Dorbrovolsky, *Contemporary Linguistics (An Introduction)*, (New York : St. Martin's Press, 1993), Ed. 2, p.1

From the verse above; it means that there are so many nations and tribes in this world. Every nations and tribes are having the differences language. So, it is important to learn other languages, because it will make people possible to know each other and to make relation with those who come from different nations. Considering the function of the language, English is one of the most important languages in the world. Language is very important in life, so the language must be learned, which is language for communication in the world.

English language is used as a kind of "universal language" now in many countries, it is very important to learn and to speak it properly. English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. In addition over one billion people currently learn English. In fact, it is estimated that one in four people learn English as a foreign language.

English is the global language of communication. Businesses use English to communicate with companies from other countries. Also in today international market, learning English as a second language has almost become a necessity, as English is the language of communication in international business, and international politics. Most academic publications across a range of fields are in English. Therefore to study English, learners need to look no further than the internet or media which is dominated by the English language.

In Indonesia, mastering English as a foreign language now increase rapidly. Foreign language education is claimed to be inevitable in the era of globalization and it is an inseparable part of human resources development

programs to increase the quality of the Indonesian people so that they are able to compete with other people from other parts of the world.³

English is taught and used as a foreign language in Indonesia. The objectives of English teaching in Indonesia are stated in the national curriculum. Therefore, the English teaching program has to be carried out in accordance with the existing curriculum. The students are required to master four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing as it is targeted by the curriculum. In addition, they also have to master the language components such as pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. It is expected that at the end of the teaching and learning process, the students are able to use English in both oral and writing forms.

Writing, although it is a complicated skill, is definitely the skill that the language teacher must teach their students. Writing is very important in languages. The writing mastery is not thing obtained naturally, but it needs practice and do training step by step. Therefore, in the teaching learning writing process, the students must be involved, especially in exercises and evaluation. In order they can be more competence in writing skill. Teacher plays main role in teaching and learning, he or she is demanded to have certain ability and skill in which planned and paused in the unit of lesson program.

Despite what have already been done in the teaching of writing, it is admitted that the student's ability in writing is still low as revealed by some studies concerning the students' writing quality. Many of the research findings

³ Gunawan, A, *Kedudukan dan Fungsi Bahasa Asing di Indonesia dalam Era Globalisasi. A Paper Presented in the Kongres Bahasa Indonesia VII. Depdikbud, (Jakarta, 1988), p. 3*

indicate that the students' writing ability is not satisfactory yet. The reason of the students' disappointing writing ability is the lack of practices of teaching strategy in class.

This case can be influenced by the use of method and techniques. As a teacher we have to choose the exact method which appropriates with the material, so the students will be enthusiastic to learn English especially in writing. In the application, the most important thing to be achieved by a teacher is selecting and using an exact method and effective technique in every lesson given.

The successful or unsuccessful of the teaching learning process is visible from the used of appropriate teaching strategy with selecting suitable techniques; the teaching learning will run well. On the contrary using and selecting inappropriate method will cause unreachable purpose.

Writing is an important language activity. This case as stated by Byrne that is, "Writing is an activity to produce a sequence of sentences arranged in a particular order and linked together in certain ways. When people write, they use graphic symbols in the form of letters or combination of letters that relate to the sounds they make when they speak".⁴

Writing is communicative skill dealing with human being uses the language to communicate through a written language. Writing also plays a very important role in numbers of way; a way of thinking, learning, and discovering. It is used to share ideas, information, and thought with others. It is generally agreed that beginning level EFL students need to learn the basic convention of writing.

⁴ Byrne, D, *Teaching Writing Skill*. Longman Group Ltd, (England, 1979), p. 1

EFL students in general have difficulty in generating ideas in their paragraph or essay writing classes because the teacher assigns them to write paragraphs without giving a model of paragraph organization. The teacher also monotonously lets them write the paragraph by themselves without giving any practical example of paragraph writing technique. Effective prewriting strategies such as brainstorming, generating, organizing and planning a paragraph or essay are needed. Writing teachers should teach and train their students to make use of various planning strategies in writing.

By those reasons, an English teacher must be able to use the appropriate methods and variety techniques to present the English writing material in the classroom and evaluate it. The English teacher must also know the several of English teaching methods and combine some of them in its application. Teacher should set an effective technique and a fun activity that is able to help students to learn better than before. Teacher should provide them with interesting, meaningful, enjoyable in writing activities. One an effective technique to teach English writing paragraphs is by applying concept mapping.

Concept mapping was developed in the 1960s by Joseph Novak of Stanford University. It is a technique for visually representing the structure of information (how concepts within a domain are interrelated). Concepts are represented visually, often by geometric shapes. The relationships between concepts are shown by links, which are represented by lines or arrows.⁵

⁵ http://en.Wikipedia.Org/wiki/Concept_mapping/ Accessed on March 13th 2009

Later on, concept mapping has gradually developed as one of the effective techniques in generating ideas for writing. Using concept mapping in prewriting stage was suitable to help the students to improve their writing performance in terms of content, organization, and language use. The implementation of concept mapping in writing descriptive paragraphs its not only improved the students' writing performance in terms of content, organization, and the language use, but also brought students' positive attitude during the teaching and learning process.

After the short observation in some schools, the writer found one of the schools that applied concept mapping technique in teaching and learning paragraph writing, that is MTsN I Paringin Balangan Regency.

Based on the observation and interview with English teacher during the preliminary study, fact related to the teaching of English writing was found. English teacher in this school applies this technique in her English writing paragraph. She implements this technique to make students more interest in writing activities, and help them in exploring and generating theirs idea in writing paragraph.

To know more closely about the implementation of concept mapping and the improvement of writing paragraphs achievement through this technique, the writer conducts a research on the title: **“The Implementation of Concept Mapping in Improving The Eighth Grade (VIII) Students' Ability in Writing Descriptive Paragraphs at MTsN I Paringin Balangan Regency Academic Year 2008/2009”**

To avoid any misinterpretation towards the title, the writer needs to explain some terms in the title as follows:

1. Implementation

Noun from implement means to put something into effect, to carry something out.⁶

Implementation here means the carrying out, execution or practice of a plan, a method, or any design for doing something.⁷ The action that must followed by any preliminary thinking in order for something to actually happen.

2. Concept

An idea or a principle relating to some thing abstract⁸

3. Mapping

Mapping is gerunds from map which is meant to plan or arrange something in detail⁹

Concept mapping that related to the title is a technique of exploring and generating ideas in writing which start with a thought or a word.¹⁰

4. Improving

Improving is gerunds from improve which is mean to become or make better

5. Ability

⁶ A S Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 595

⁷ [http:// Searchcrm. Teach target. Com/ Definition/](http://Searchcrm.Teachtarget.Com/Definition/) Accessed on August 30th 2009

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 236

⁹ *Ibid*, p. 715

¹⁰ Zaid, M. A. *Semantik Mapping in CLT*. English Teaching Forum, Vol. 33 No. 3, (1995), p. 6

The mental or physical capacity, power or skill required to do some thing.¹¹

The students' ability in writing descriptive paragraphs means the students' capability or the students' skill in writing descriptive paragraphs when they arrange these words into a good sentence or a good paragraph.

6. Writing

Writing is gerunds from write which is meant to make letters or other symbols on a surface.¹²

7. Descriptive

Giving a picture in words; describing something especially without expressing feeling or judging¹³

8. Paragraphs

A distinct section of a piece of writing, usually consist of several sentences of a paragraph starts on a new line.¹⁴

And paragraph is a unit of information in writing which is unified by a central idea, and considered good only if the reader completely understands the unit of information it contains and if its central idea is completely developed.¹⁵

¹¹ A S Hornby, *Op Cit*, p. 2

¹² *Ibid*, p. 1382

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 314

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 840

¹⁵ Mariana Kasim and Sabrory Rachmadie, *Writing*, (Dirjen Pendidikan Tinggi, Jakarta, 10 November 1996), p.1

So, the meaning of writing descriptive paragraphs that the writer means is. The ability to generate a correct sentence that begun from the word selection, arrange them to be a good sentence, and then organize to be a coherent paragraph by describing picture, object, persons or scenes.

B. Formulation of Problem

Concerning to the topic, the problem of this research can be formulated as follows:

1. How is the implementation of concept mapping by teacher in improving the eighth grade students' ability in writing descriptive paragraphs?
2. Can the implementation of concept mapping improve the eighth grade students' ability in writing descriptive paragraphs?

C. Reason for Adopting the Title

There are some reasons that make writer to conduct the title, they are:

1. The English Writing skill is one of skills that should be mastered by each student in order to improve the quality of their foreign language especially English language.
2. Teaching and learning English is not an easy thing, there are some difficulties in English writing. Then, in teaching English writing must have a various technique.
3. This research has been never done at MTsN I Parangin before.

D. Purpose of the research

Based on the problem above, the purposes of this study are:

1. To describe the implementation of concept mapping by teacher in improving the eighth grade (VIII) students' ability in writing descriptive paragraphs.
2. To indicate the implementation of concept mapping can improves the eighth grade (VIII) students' ability in writing descriptive paragraphs.

E. Significance of the Research

The result that is going to be achieved in this study is expected to:

1. Contribute its views on the teaching and learning of the descriptive paragraph writing for the MTsN students.
2. Enrich the ideas of how to plan the paragraphs writing lesson and conduct the writing activities in class.
3. Enrich the writer's knowledge and experience in scientific research especially about teaching and learning of the descriptive paragraph and also to provide recent data for other researches in the writing field.

F. Organization of the Content

This study is divided into five chapters as follows:

Chapter I : Introduction that includes rationale, formulation of problem, reason of adopting the title, purpose of the research, significance of the research, organization of the content.

Chapter II : Theoretical Review that includes definition of writing, definition of concept mapping, writing as a language skill, teaching writing in the EFL class, writing activities for the MTs students, writing a paragraph, concept mapping.

Chapter III : Method of Research that includes subject and object, data, source of data and techniques of collecting the data, basic framework of research, techniques of data processing and analysis, measurement design, research procedure.

Chapter IV : Report of Research Result that includes description of the research location, data presentation, data analysis.

Chapter V : Closure that includes conclusion, suggestion.