

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Research**

Writing is one of the four language skills that plays a vital role in this global community. As a productive skill, there is no doubt that writing is considered complicated for students. It is because writing encourages thinking and learning process. To produce a piece of writing, a process of creating and recreating is needed until the writer is able to clarify and express the ideas in a clear way. It needs special skill and not everyone can develop it naturally. Richards and Renandya (2002:303) state that writing is the most difficult skill for second language learners and the difficulty is not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in transferring the ideas into texts. In line with the statement above, Brown (2007:391) states that written product is the result of thinking, drafting, and revising process that needs special skill and not everyone can develop it naturally. Therefore, students get some difficulties in producing a piece of writing particularly in English as their foreign language.

One of the reasons that students' writing ability is still far from what is expected is the problems faced by the teachers in teaching especially in assessing students' writing. Assessing writing is important to examine students' progress in writing, but some teachers underestimate the writing assessment and find some difficulties in assessing students' writing. They assume that assessing writing is time consuming. So, they tend to rarely give

writing assignments to the students. Teaching writing in junior high school aims to develop students competence in writing various text type varying from functional texts of some functional activities such as inviting people, requesting someone to do something, and getting thing done, to different genres which include descriptive, procedure, recount, narrative and report texts.

Based on the preliminary study on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2014, writing also has a tendency to be neglected at MTsN Mojokerto. It was found that the students' writing skill was still low. Their achievement was still under the minimum mastery level. Even though, the subject has to facilitate the students with the four language skill, English teachers of MTsN Mojokerto provided few opportunities for students to write. This was because the main target of teaching English at SMP or MTs level is that the students can do the final exam (UAS) well. In the final exam itself, writing is not tested. On the other hand, it is time consuming to check students' work. Meanwhile, one English teacher should handle at least four up to six classes.

Indeed, the teachers corrected the students' writing by either circling or underlining their mistakes. Finally, they gave the writing back to the students with marks and some additional notes on grammatical errors, preposition problems, punctuation, capitalization, organization, and vocabularies. Unfortunately, the students often ignored teachers' corrections and comments. It happened many times that it could be seen from the mistakes they make on writing assignment. On the next writing assignment, the students made the

same mistakes because they paid less attention to the teachers' comments and correction. The main problem emerged was the students' follow up toward the teacher's feedback. Besides, the way the teacher assess the students' writing result didn't use appropriate design and the tools of the assessment.

Based on the problem identified, the researcher decided to apply peer feedback technique. Peer reviewing is referred to as 'peer feedback", which is an assessment form performed by equal status learners (Gielen in jahin: 66). In line with (Mangelsdorf, 1992) says that in 'peer review' a student does more than simply editing and evaluating another student's essay. Students respond to *what* the essay says as well as *how* it says it. Peer feedback is comments, corrections, and also suggestions, from peers to each others' work in the term of content, organization, punctuation, vocabulary, and grammar.

It is known that feedback with follow up revision will be very helpful. Hyland (2006: 1) says that providing feedback and revisions during the process of writing can be more effective rather than at the end of the process. Then, peer responding can encourage students to participate in the writing conferences where they can obtain much information from each other to improve what they have written (O'Malley and Pierce, 1996:156; Brown, 2001:353). Along with this, Seow (2003:317) points out that peer responding can be effectively done in small groups or in pairs. It means that peer feedback can engage the students to be active. They can give feedback each others. Moreover, it can be a possible way out when students react too passively to teacher feedback (Harmer, 2004:115).

There are some previous researches using the same technique. Agustiningsih (2005) revealed after doing peer feedback that some students of SMPN 4 Palu showed the ability to respond and identify mistakes in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar on their peer's work. Then , Mubarok (2009) found out that the implementation of peer feedback in teaching and learning process could improve the writing ability of the third year students of MA Tarbiyatul Wathon Gresik as well as successfully encourage them to actively and enthusiastically take part in the teaching and learning process. Further, Wardani (2011) conducted the use of peer feedback to improve the writing ability of the eight graders of MTsN Bangkalan also success engage students to be active and improve their writing ability.

Moreover, the implementation of peer feedback in the classroom offers beneficial effects for the students either as the writers or as the readers. In addition to improve writers' drafts, it can assist to develop readers' understanding of good writing as well (Hyland, 2003:198). In line with Hyland, Villamil and Guerrero (2006:23) argue that peer feedback provide both readers and writers prosperous and extensive assistance during the writing process by sharing ideas. Nation and Newton (2009:143) also have the same opinion that peer feedback can be beneficial in obtaining an adequate product as well as providing training for future writing. In other words, this practice has become an alternative solution to develop the students' understanding in learning how to write and how to revise. By discussing and

sharing opinion on each others' draft, the students are expected to become aware of the strengths and weaknesses on their peers' draft.

For those reasons above, this research used peer feedback as a technique to improve the students' ability in writing procedure text since writing also had a tendency to be neglected at MTsN Mojokerto. The research was conducted at the eighth graders because they were appropriate in doing peer feedback technique seeing that the result of the preliminary study the students' ability in writing procedure text is still low although they have been taught this kind of text type when they were in seventh grade.

This research was categorized success if more than 75% of the 36 students (27 students) actively engaged in the teaching and learning process and achieved the score of 70 as required by school minimum mastery level.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Based on the background of the research, the research problem is formulated in a question as follows:

1. How can the use of peer feedback improve the eighth grade students' ability in writing procedure text at MTsN Mojokerto?
2. How can the use of peer feedback improve the students' active engagements in the teaching of writing in the eighth grade of MTsN Mojokerto?

### **1.3 Objective of the Research**

In line with the statement of the problem, the research is aimed to improve the eighth grade students' writing ability in procedure text and their active engagements in the teaching of writing process at MTsN Mojokerto through the use of peer feedback.

### **1.4 Significance of the Research**

This study is expected to provide contribution to English teaching and learning process especially for teachers and other writers. The finding of this research is expected to be beneficial in providing the English teachers an alternative way to improve the students' writing ability. For future writers, the finding of this research can be used as a reference for those who wish to conduct a research in similar fields. While for the students, it can engage them to be active in the teaching and learning process in order to help students improve their writing ability.

### **1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Research**

This research focused on the way of implementing peer feedback to improve the ability of the eighth graders of MTsN Mojokerto in writing procedure text in terms of content, organization, punctuation, vocabulary, and grammar and also their engagements in the teaching of writing itself. The use of peer feedback was implemented to the eighth graders of MTsN Mojokerto,

particularly in VIII B which consist of 36 students in the second semester of the 2014/2015 academic year.

### **1.6 Definition of Key Terms**

There are some key terms which are important to be defined to avoid the possibility of having wrong interpretation. They are:

- a. Peer feedback refers to a technique in which students work in small groups to provide and receive feedback on each others' writing by filling revising checklist under the guidance of their teacher. This term is used interchangeably with the terms 'peer response', 'peer editing', and 'peer review'. Revising checklist is a form of checklist table that contains directions to be used for the students to give feedback on their peers' writing.
- b. Writing process is the complex system people use when transcribing ideas into written form which is made up of four main stages: planning, drafting, revising and editing. Brown (2007:391)
- c. Procedure text is a type of text that tells the reader or listener how to do something. Its purpose is to provide instructions for making something, doing something or getting somewhere. Anderson and Anderson (1998:28)